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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION OF
TRADE NAME DRESSES IN THREE DETERMINED
PRICE RANGES.

by

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Approved by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Every woman wants to be well dressed no matter what her age, her station in life, her financial standing, or her temperament. In order to look her best, she must be able to recognize quality of construction and style when selecting a ready-made dress. In all dresses there are differences in construction in various price ranges.¹

This study was made to determine if there is any relationship between price and quality of construction in dresses made by one manufacturer and between garments made by different manufacturers. In order to secure this information a check sheet was prepared and used to keep uniform information regarding each dress. Four stores in Greensboro, North Carolina, Belk's Department Store, Meyer's Department Store, Ellis Stone & Co. and E. L. Brownhills Inc. cooperated in this study. One hundred and thirty dresses in these stores were examined during November and December and checked by the check sheet found in the appendix.

In order to limit the study, only trade-name dresses of a determined price range were selected for examination. The lowest price selected was \$7.95 because no trade name dress was found below that price in a material other than cotton, and since this study was made on winter dresses the cotton dresses were not considered. Fifteen dollars and ninety-five cents seemed a natural division for the low priced range since six of the manufacturers had \$16.95 as their top range. The medium price range was

1. Gerald Wendt, "Dresses: Women's and Misses," Consumer's Union Reports, 7:243, September, 1942.

composed of dresses from \$16.95 to \$25. At \$25 there was another natural break since there were five of the manufacturers who made no dresses that retailed below \$25. For the medium-high price range, \$39.95 was chosen because the retailers all agreed that a dress above \$39.95 would be called a high price dress and this study was limited to low and medium priced winter dresses. In summary, the price ranges were low price range \$7.95-\$15.95, medium price range \$16.95-\$22.95, and medium-high price range \$25-\$39.95. Prices were going up very rapidly at the time of this study and the retailers were not required by the manufacturers to sell the dresses at stated prices. A great many trade-name dresses are sold to only one store in a city. Because these dresses are nationally advertised, the manufacturers were trying to keep their prices as near the old level as possible. In the early fall most retailers were still selling their trade-name dresses at advertised prices but when the manufacturers increased the price several times the retailers increased their price, although the manufacturers were still trying to hold the retail price down.²

During World War II and since the war, many manufacturers quit making inexpensive dresses, skirts, and suits and turned out the fabrics available to them in the form of more expensive garments.³

The following sources were consulted in order to avoid duplication of the subject:

Thomas R. Palfrey and Henry E. Coleman, Guide to Bibliographies of Theses, United States and Canada, Second Edition. Chicago: American Library Association, 1940.

2. "Stores Cool to Holding Prices on Brand Names," Daily News Record, New York. September 15, 1947.

3. "Price Tags." Consumer's Guide, 12:14, January, 1946.

United States Library of Congress, A List of American Doctoral Dissertations. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

Education Index: A Cumulative Author and Subject Index to a Selected List of Educational Periodicals, Books and Pamphlets, 1929-1946. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1929-1946.

United States Office of Education, Subject Index of Theses Studies in Home Economics Education. United States Department of the Interior, Bulletin No. 1173. Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, 1937.

United States Office of Education, Abstracts of Studies in Home Economics Education, 1934-1938. United States Department of Interior, Vocational Division, Washington, D.C.: Office of Education, September 1939.

United States Office of Education, Abstracts of Home Economics Education Reported by Colleges and Universities, 1931-1934, United States Department of Interior, Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, 1934.

United States Department of Education, Titles of Unpublished Theses in the Field of Home Economics Completed During the Years 1924-1931. Washington, D. C.: Bureau of Home Economics, May 1932.

United States Department of Education, Notes on Graduate Studies and Research in Home Economics and Home Economics Education, 1941-1942. Washington, D. C.: Division of Home Economics, 1942.

United States Department of Education, Completed Theses in Home Economics and Related Fields in Colleges and Universities of the United States, 1942-1946. Washington, D. C.: United States Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, 1946.

United States Department of Education, Completed Theses in Home Economics and Related Fields in Colleges and Universities of the United States, 1946-1947. Washington, D. C.: Department of Agriculture, December 1947.

Three theses were found that had some bearing on the subject. The one most closely related was written in 1940 by Mabel G. Bowers.⁴ She examined cotton, silk, wool, rayon, and linen dresses that were priced from seventy-nine cents to \$95 and found that silk and rayon dresses reached their peak of construction between \$35 and \$45. Wool dresses did

4. Mabel G. Bowers, A Study of the Relationship Between Price and Quality of Construction in Ready Made Dresses. Master's Thesis, University of Texas, 1940. p. 120.

not reach their peak of construction until they reached \$75. "In general, quality of construction varies less than 10 per cent at any given price group between any two of the fibers."

Another thesis BUYING READY MADE DRESSES AND SLIPS by C. L. Scott was a "survey made of the various types and quality of ready-made dresses and slips with respect to materials, cut and workmanship." Worn dresses were also examined." "From these findings points to look for and to avoid so as to get good values were prepared in bulletin form. Sketches supplement the bulletin as an aid to consumer purchasing."⁵ Some of these findings were used in setting up the check sheet of this study.

The other thesis as reported in the Journal of Home Economics was a study of silk street dresses and silk yard goods. "This study showed that reliable standards and dependable labeling are needed as guides to quality of both workmanship and materials for garments so widely used."⁶

An explanation of the terms used on the check sheet:

FABRIC - Name of the fabric secured either from the label or salesperson.

firm - fabric woven closely enough for that type of material.

medium - not as closely woven as the firm fabric.

sleazy - very poor, open weave, lacks body.

snags - fibers will catch easily and can be pulled from the body of the fabric.

LABELS - Any label that gave any information about the dress was called an

5. C. L. Scott, Buying Ready Made Dresses and Slips. Farmer's Bulletin No. 1851. Washington, D. C.: Department of Agriculture, September, 1940. p. 22.

6. Ethel L. Phelps, Florence E. Petzel, Allene Sewell Loring, and Eleanor Anderson Nielson, "A Study of Certain Factors Related to Consumers' Choices in the Purchase of "Silk" Street Dresses and Silk Yard Goods," Journal of Home Economics, 31:393-398, June, 1939.

informative label. Those labels that gave only the name of the dress or stated that it was an original design, or that it was good to wear in California weather, or made other such statements were called fashion labels.

other information - referred to any information found on the label that was not mentioned on the check sheet.

CUT

Skirt - grain true - the filling thread ran parallel to the floor on the hip line and the warp thread met the filling threads at right angles.

sides even - neither piece had been stretched so as to distort the grain line at the seam.

Waist - grain true - refer to Skirt - grain true.

sides alike - both sides are cut using the same direction of the grain.

Piecing - necessary - as in skirts that were too wide to go on the material.

conspicuous - piecing on facings, belts, center seams in skirts, etc.

Sleeves - true grain - refer to grain true on skirt.

puckered - unnecessary gathers or pleats on the armseye or on the sleeves as it goes into the armseye.

set - open sleeve method - the sleeve is sewed into the armseye and then the underarm seam is continuous from the lower edge of the sleeve throughout the length of the entire side seam.

closed sleeve method - the sleeve is closed and the

underarm seam is sewed. Then the sleeve is set into the armseye and the armseye seam is stitched.

SEAMS

Waistline - taped - any kind of straight tape stitched at the waistline.

bound - edges of the seams were enclosed in a fabric and then stitched.

other finish - any method other than the above by which the seam was finished.

plain - no finish on the edge of the seam.

width - the size of the seam beyond the stitching line.

Armseye - width - the size of the seam beyond the stitching.

plain - no finish on the edge of the seam.

bound - refer to waistline seam - bound.

other finish - any method other than the above by which the seam was finished.

Stay - any method of reinforcement other than taping or double stitching.

taped - refer to waistline - taped.

double stitched - two or more rows of stitching around the armseye.

Side - $\frac{1}{2}$ " - the seam is stitched $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the edge of the material.

narrow - less than $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

wide - more than $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

pinked - the edges of the seams were notched with pinking shears.

bound - refer to waistline seams - bound.

stitched - the edges of the seams were turned back and stitched (this is sometimes called a hemmed seam).

other finish - any other method that prevents the seams from raveling.

shoulders - width $\frac{1}{2}$ " - width recorded if more or less than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

STITCHING - straight - means that the stitching line had no wavy places.

crooked - wavy places in the line of stitching.

number per inch good - the number of stitches per inch which was satisfactory for good quality, 12 to 14 stitches per inch.⁷

poor - the number of stitches was not adequate for good quality.

THREAD - correct size - the thread would not appear too large or too small to a careful observer.

color correct - the color of the thread matched the material on which it was used.

correct finish - silk or mercerized thread on silk, wool, or rayon material.

DETAILS

Shirring - several rows of stitching used to draw up fullness.

(shirring was not considered in this study because so few dresses were Shirred).

Plackets - zipper smooth - no puckers on the back or the front of the dress where the zipper was sewed in.

sides even - the waistline on the back and front meet so that there was a continuous straight seam around the waist.

buttons - smooth - refer to zipper smooth.

snaps - smooth - refer to zipper smooth.

hooks and eyes - refer to zipper smooth.

alterable - the material was just as wide where the zipper

7. C. L. Scott, op. cit., p. 14.

was stitched as it was on the rest of the seam.

stayed - an extra piece of material used behind the zipper to make it stronger and protect other clothing.

FACING - straight - a straight piece of material used as a facing.

shaped - material shaped like the piece of the dress on which it was used.

bias - a piece of material cut on the bias and used as a facing.

smooth - no puckers or gathers.

puckered - has wrinkles or gathers.

stitched well - stitching kept an even distance from the edge of the material.

BUTTONHOLES - bound - material cut on the bias and used as a facing.

buttonhole facing - split ends - a straight line cut and turned under forming a pointed oval.

square ends - the facing cut in a triangular shape and turned under at the buttonhole ends so that a rectangular shape is formed in the facing as it is sewed to the wrong side of the buttonhole.

BUTTONS - glass - made of glass.

pearl - made from shells of the pearl oyster.

plastic - made of a synthetic material.

covered - a mold covered with a fabric.

washable - can be laundered successfully according to the label.

drycleanable - can be drycleaned according to the label.

decorative - add to the design of the dress.

plain - do not add to the design.

long shanks - shanks long enough to allow the buttons to be pinned on and still allow enough room for the material to go under

the buttons easily.

short shank - those that could not be pinned on satisfactorily and still leave room for the material to go under the button easily.

sewed loosely - not tight enough to prevent the button from sagging.

firmly - buttons stay in place well.

too firmly - material is puckered under the button or the top

material does not have room to pass between the button and the material to which the button was sewed.

BELTS - lined - any material used inside the belt to stiffen it.

cleanable - will either dry clean or wash as shown by the label.

eyelets - metal - made of metal.

worked - buttonhole stitch used around the holes.

durable - will last as long as the dress.

buckle - metal - made of metal.

covered - refer to buttons covered.

plastic - refer to buttons plastic.

pearl - refer to buttons - pearl.

BELT LOOPS - cloth made of a fabric

thread - crocheted or looped of thread.

fastened well - both ends were fastened and would stand a slight pull.

too large - too much space after the belt was put in the loops.

too small - belt will not go through easily.

SHOULDER PADS - easily removed - self-explanatory.

easily replaced - can be snapped or pinned in.

POCKETS - roomy - plenty of room for the hands to go in and come out easily.

well located - placed so that they are convenient for use.

reinforced - pocket doubled or doubled at the top.

double stitched - two rows of stitching at the top or all the way around.

DECORATIONS - appropriate add to the appearance of the dress.

durable - will last as long as the dress.

harmonious - free from discord due to use of color or line.

HEMS - finish - any finish used on the hem.

width - hem measured to include tape (if used).

CHAPTER II

A COMPARISON OF PRICE WITH CONSTRUCTION

All dresses should have a label that gives sufficient information which makes possible the identification of the quality and performance of the goods in order to serve as an effective means for the consumer to understand the "why" of the relationship of price and quality.¹

TABLE I presents a summary of the labels found on the dresses in each of the three price ranges used in this study.

TABLE I

LABELS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$25.95 - \$39.95 |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Number with labels | 31 | 22 | 8 |
| Number without labels | 18 | 13 | 38 |
| Fashion labels | 4 | 8 | 0 |
| Information | 27 | 14 | 8 |
| Care | | | |
| laundrying | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| drycleaning | 15 | 9 | 5 |
| Fabric | | | |
| fiber | 7 | 12 | 8 |
| finish | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| brand name | 3 | 0 | 0 |

Only sixty-one of the 130 dresses studied had any kind of label.

1. Roger Wolcott, Informative Labeling, National Consumer-Retailer Council, Inc., 1941. p. 3.

The distribution of these labels was as follows: low price range, thirty-one; medium price range, twenty-two; medium-high price range, eight.

Four of the labels in the low price range, eight in the medium price range, and none in the medium-high price range were fashion labels.

According to the National Consumer-Retailer Council, Inc. a good label should present the five points:(1) "What the object is made of; (2) How it is made; (3) How will it wear; (4) How to care for it; and (5) Who made it."² Only seven of the dresses in the low price range answered the first point "What the object is made of." Three of the dresses were made of a flannel fabric which was a mixture of wool and rayon. One of the dresses made from the wool and rayon mixture was priced at \$10.95 and the other two were priced at \$14.95. There were two 100 per cent wool dresses priced at \$14.96, two dresses made of Cohama rayon priced at \$8.95, and one made of Crown tested rayon priced at \$12.95. There were eleven rayon gabardine, twelve rayon alpacas, and twelve flat crepe dresses. The other materials used were flannel, romaine crepe, spun rayon, faille, and jersey. Five of the rayon crepe dresses in the low price range were made from a low grade crepe although the material was of a good quality for that type of material. The alpacas were also cheap in appearance but the other materials seemed to be of equal quality to those in the medium price range and the medium-high price range. In the medium price range twelve out of twenty-two labels stated the fiber content and three of these also gave information on care of the dress. Five of the fabrics were made of a mixture of wool and cotton. All of these were knit and were manufactured by the same company. One of the dresses made from this fabric was priced at \$17.95 and the others were

2. Ibid, p. 7.

priced at \$22.95. There were three dresses priced at \$16.95 made of 100 per cent wool flannel; two of them were made by the same company. The other four dresses priced at \$16.95 were made of a wool and rayon crepe and were manufactured by a third company. In this price range, flannel, gabardine, and wool knit material were in the lead with romaine crepe, faille, jersey smooth crepe, wool and rayon plaid, rough crepe, and alpaca also used. Eight of the dresses in the medium-high price range had labels that stated the fiber content. Five of the dresses were made by the same company and were a knit material made of a mixture of wool and cotton. Four of these dresses were priced at \$25 and the other one was priced at \$29.95. There was one dress priced at \$29.95 that was made of a mixture of rayon, wool and nylon; and two priced at \$39.95 that were made of 100 per cent wool.

The second point that should be stated on the label is "How is it made". The finish of the material would come under this point. Fabric finish is important and should be put on the label as this information helps the consumer know what to expect from a fabric. The finish of the material was stated on seven of the labels found on the dresses of low price range; six of the dresses in the medium price range; and five in the medium-high price range. Three dresses in the low price range named the finish used on the fabric and explained the meaning of the finish. The finish was "Everized" which means that the dress is shrunk to a permanent fit and will shrink less than two per cent when laundered. These dresses were all manufactured by the same company and varied in price from \$10.95 to \$12.95. In the medium price range there was one dress that was Everized and five knit dresses with the "Fulura" finish. All of the dresses with the Fulura finish were knit and were made of a mixture of cotton and wool. This finish guaranteed that the fabric would neither stretch nor bag. Four of these dresses were

priced at \$22.95 and one was priced at \$17.95. In the medium-high price range there were only five dresses made of fabrics that had a special finish. This finish was Fulura and was used on four dresses priced at \$25 and one priced at \$29.95.

The third point, "How will it wear" was not answered on any of the labels.

The fourth point, "How to care for it" was answered on a larger per cent of the labels. In the low price range 36 per cent of the dresses must be dry cleaned. Eight of the labels gave no other information about care; three required measuring before and after cleaning; two must be ironed on the wrong side and one of these required a dry cloth. The use of a warm iron and a double thickness of cloth was suggested by three labels. These same three labels stated that no adjustment would be made if the garment were ruined by the use of a deodorant. In the medium price range 28 per cent of the labels stated that the dresses required dry cleaning. Two of these dresses must be measured before and after cleaning. There were five other dresses made of a knit material that must be dry cleaned but were guaranteed not to stretch or bag. One of these dresses sold for \$17.95 and the four others for \$22.95. In the medium-high price range only 10 per cent of the dresses had labels that stated a method of care. These dresses all required dry cleaning. One was priced at \$29.95 and the other four were priced at \$25. Washing was a less frequent method of care probably because of the fact that the dresses studied were winter dresses. In the low price range 14 per cent of the dresses were washable. Two of these dresses had "money back-unconditionally washable" stated on the labels and were found on dresses that were priced at \$12.95. These dresses were both made by the same manufacturer. Two of the dresses in the medium price range were washable. They were both priced at \$16.95. One of these required the removal of belt,

buttons, and buckle before laundering. In the medium-high price range there were no dresses that could be washed.

The fifth point, "Who made it" was answered only on the dresses that gave the fiber content.

Belts are a contributing factor in the quality of a dress. "Remember when buying a dress that must be cleaned that belts made of the same material as the dress and faced with imitation leather will not survive one trip to the cleaners. Look for one lined with material that the retailer will guarantee to be cleanable.³ In 1942 a study was made on dresses in order to help the consumer get a good dress for her money. It was stated that a dress priced above \$8.95 should have a belt with no less than a leatherette backing.⁴

TABLE II summarizes the information regarding dress belts, as found in the three price ranges of this study.

TABLE II

BELTS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Number with belts | 36 | 21 | 25 |
| Belts: | | | |
| lined with | | | |
| fabric | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| leatherette | 16 | 10 | 9 |
| leather | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| paper | 0 | 1 | 0 |

3. Ruth Brindze, Stretching Your Dollar in Wartime. New York: Vanguard, 1942. p. 96.

4. Gerald Wendt, "Dresses: Women's and Misses'," Consumer's Union Reports, 7:243-248, September, 1942.

TABLE II
(Continued)

| | | | |
|------------------------|----|----|----|
| Belts: | | | |
| unlined | | | |
| fabric belt | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| imitation leather | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| patent leather | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| gold | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| leather | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| inset | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| sashes | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| no belts | 13 | 14 | 21 |
| two piece suit dresses | 9 | 10 | 7 |

In the low price range there were nine two-piece dresses, five with no belts and three with inset belts. Fifty-four per cent of the belts in the low price range were acceptable. Forty-four per cent of these belts had good appearing leatherette backings. One dress priced at \$12.95 had a leather belt, one priced at \$14.95 had an imitation leather belt, and one priced at \$29.95 had a belt with a leather backing. Forty-six per cent of the belts were not acceptable since they had no backing. Twenty-one per cent of these belts had no lining at all and 18 per cent had thin linings. There were two other belts that were not acceptable; one of these had a sticky back and one was a patent belt that was sticky all over.

In the medium price range, there were fourteen dresses with no belts; ten were two-piece dresses; two dresses required no belt; and two had inset belts. Sixty-four per cent of these belts were acceptable. Two of the belts were not acceptable. There was one gold belt and one patent leather belt.

In the medium-high price range, twenty-one out of the forty-six dresses required no belts. One dress had an inset belt, and fourteen of the dresses were draped at the waistline or had a long torso with draping or a bow on the skirt. Seven of the dresses were two-piece dresses. All of

the belts in this price range were acceptable in so far as having a backing is concerned but none of them had any label information regarding their care. However, none of the dresses in the whole group of 130 dresses gave this information but it would have been possible since there is a company that makes a drycleanable belt backing and stamps drycleanable on the backing at regular intervals.

Belt loops change very little with the price after you reach the \$16.95 dresses. TABLE III summarizes the information regarding belt loops found on the dresses in each of the three price ranges of this study.

TABLE III

BELT LOOPS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Dresses no loops | 16 | 16 | 26 |
| Belt loops: | | | |
| thread | | | |
| too long | 23 | 9 | 9 |
| correct length | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| cloth | | | |
| too short | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 33 | 19 | 20 |

Out of the thirty-two dresses that needed belt loops in the low price range there were 69 per cent with loops that were too long, and thirty-one per cent with loops of the correct length.

In the medium price range 54 per cent of the dresses had belt loops. Twenty-six per cent of these loops were too long but twenty-nine per cent were the correct length. As the dresses advanced in price, there was little improvement in the relative size of the belt loops.

Forty-five per cent of the dresses in the medium-high price range had belt loops that were too long; 50 per cent of the belt loops were the

correct length and one dress had loops that were too short. This dress was priced at \$35 and was the only dress examined that had cloth loops.

TABLE IV summarizes the information regarding the belt fasteners found in the dresses in each of the three price ranges. Covered buckles were the most frequently used in all price ranges.

TABLE IV
BELT FASTENERS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| No fasteners | 16 | 16 | 26 |
| Belt fasteners: | | | |
| buckles | | | |
| covered | 25 | 12 | 12 |
| metal | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| plastic | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| leather | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| snaps | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 33 | 19 | 20 |

In the low price range, there were twenty-six covered, one plastic, five metal, and one leather buckle. One belt was snapped but because of the design the snaps seemed to be the best finish. In the medium price range, there were twelve covered buckles, two metal and one leather buckles. One dress was designed in such a way as to make a snapped fastener more desirable than a buckle. In the medium-high price range, there were twelve belts with covered buckles, two with metal, one with plastic, and three with leather buckles. Because of the design of the dress two of the belts in this price range were fastened with snaps.

Table V summarizes the information regarding the buttons found on the dresses in the three price ranges of this study. Metal buttons were the most frequently used in all price ranges; covered buttons came next, and then

plastic buttons. This was probably due to the season in which this study was made.

TABLE V

BUTTONS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| No buttons | 13 | 6 | 30 |
| Buttons: | | | |
| plastic | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| metal | 14 | 13 | 6 |
| pearl | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| glass | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| bone | 6 | 0 | 4 |
| covered | 11 | 12 | 2 |
| Total | 36 | 29 | 16 |

TABLE VI summarizes the information regarding the color of thread used on the dresses in this study. The thread was too light in color on 10 per cent of the total number of dresses studied.

TABLE VI

THREAD USED

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Thread: | | | |
| too light | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| too dark | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| different color | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| color correct | 39 | 31 | 42 |

In the low price range 16 per cent of the dresses had thread that was too light, 8 per cent in the medium price range, and 4 per cent in the medium-high price range had thread that was too light in color. One dress had thread that was too dark and four dresses had more than one color of thread used on them. Two of these dresses were in the low price range and

two were in the medium-high price range.

There were very few pockets used on any of the dresses. Out of the nineteen dresses with pockets only four were not reinforced on the back. One of these dresses was priced at \$10.95, one at \$17.95, one at \$22.95, and one at \$35. This shows no relationship between price and quality of construction.

Decorations were considered as only those things that were added to the dress such as bows, pins, sequins, ribbons, fur, and the like. There were no dresses in the low price range that had any decorations. Twelve dresses in the medium price range and ten in the medium-high price range were decorated.

TABLE VII summarizes the information regarding the zippers used in the dresses of this study. Zippers were used in all dresses except those that were made to open down the front. The length of the zippers and the number used seemed to be an indication of price.

TABLE VII

ZIPPERS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| No zipper | 5 | 10 | 5 |
| Zippers: | | | |
| placket zippers | | | |
| 7" (skirt) | 5 | 6 | 11 |
| 10" (dress) | 36 | 10 | 3 |
| 11" " | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 12" " | 3 | 3 | 18 |
| neck opening | | | |
| 6" | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 7" | 0 | 7 | 8 |
| wrist opening | | | |
| 4" | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| opening through waistline | | | |
| front 16" | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| back 22" | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| dress - one zipper | 45 | 20 | 30 |
| two zippers | 2 | 5 | 8 |
| four zippers | 0 | 0 | 3 |

The seven inch zipper was used exclusively for the skirts in every price range. The length of the underarm zipper varied with the price of the dress. In the low price range there were thirty-six ten-inch zippers, in the medium price range ten ten-inch zippers, and in the medium-high price range three ten-inch zippers. The eleven inch underarm zipper did not occur in the low price range and occurred only once in each of the other two price ranges. There were three twelve-inch underarm zippers found in each of the first two price ranges and eighteen in the medium-high price range. Two zippers were found in the neck opening of the dresses of low price range, nine in the medium price range, and nine in the medium-high price range. There were no zippers at the wrist until the \$35 dresses were reached. In this group there were only two dresses with zippers at wrist. Other length zippers found in the medium-high price range included an eight-inch zipper in the neck opening, one eighteen-inch zipper down the front, and five twenty-two inch zippers down the center back. There were three dresses in the medium-high price range that had three zippers each, and two dresses with two zippers each. None of the dresses in the other price ranges had more than two zippers used on a dress.

The stitching was straight in 120 of the dresses in each price range. The crooked stitching occurred on four dresses in the low price range and six in the medium-high price range.

TABLE VIII summarizes the information regarding the stitching used on the dresses in this study. The crooked stitching occurred around the zipper, on the underside of the neck facings, and on the finish of the seam where the edge was turned back and stitched. The length of the stitches also varied on the zipper seams of these same dresses.

TABLE VIII
STITCHING

| Price range | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Stitching: | | | |
| good | 40 | 32 | 35 |
| too long | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| crooked | 4 | 0 | 6 |

As few as nine stitches per inch were used on five dresses in the low price range, three in the medium price range, and six in the medium-high price range that had as few as nine stitches per inch. The average number of stitches per inch was twelve but a few dresses had eleven. In the CONSUMER'S GUIDE, it was stated that a good dress should have fifteen stitches per inch.⁵ However, in the report of a more recent survey of housewives, it was found that most women preferred from twelve to fourteen stitches per inch in house dresses.⁶

TABLE IX summarizes the information regarding buttonholes and button-loops as found in dresses of the three price ranges of this study. Buttonholes are often said "to make or break a dress." However this study showed that the per cent of good buttonholes found in dresses was actually less in the medium price range.

5. "Stretching Your Cotton Goods Budget", Consumer's Guide, 7:10, February 15, 1941.

6. Alice Sundquist and Mary C. Whitlock, "The Consumer Speaks about Housedresses." Journal of Home Economics, 38:563, November, 1946.

TABLE IX

BUTTONHOLES - BUTTONLOOPS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Buttonholes: | | | |
| worked poor | 21 | 20 | 4 |
| worked good | 14 | 7 | 7 |
| bound | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| bias loops | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| braid | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 36 | 29 | 16 |

In the low price range 69 per cent of the buttonholes were found to be worked too thin against 58 per cent in the medium price range and 25 per cent in the medium-high price range. There was one dress in the medium price range and four in the medium-high price range with bound buttonholes.

Bias loops were used on two dresses. One of these dresses was in the low price range and one in the medium-high price range. There was one dress in the low price range with soutache bias loops.

TABLE X summarizes the information regarding the dress hems as found on the dresses in the three price ranges of this study. The finish of the hems differed greatly as the price of the dress increased.

TABLE X

HEMS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Finishes: | | | |
| edges turned | 23 | 0 | 1 |
| edges stitched | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| edges taped | 26 | 35 | 44 |
| Depth of hems: | | | |
| 1/4" | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 1/2" | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 7/8" | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1" | 1 | 0 | 2 |

TABLE X
(Continued)

| Depth of hems: | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----|
| 1 1/8" | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1 1/2" | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 3/4" | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 7/8" | 10 | 6 | 7 |
| 2" | 24 | 10 | 14 |
| 2 1/8" | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 1/4" | 2 | 7 | 5 |
| 2 1/2" | 0 | 2 | 7 |
| 2 3/8" | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2 5/8" | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2 3/4" | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 2 7/8" | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 3" | 1 | 0 | 0 |

In the low price range three dresses had the edges of the skirt hems turned under and the dress hemmed with the regular hemming stitch. There were no dresses in the medium price range, and only two in the medium-high price range that were finished in the above manner. Both of these dresses were priced at \$35; one was a wool sport dress and the other one a wash silk dress.

The depth of the hem varied from one-fourth inch to three inches in the low price range, from one-half to 2 3/4 inches in the medium price range, and from seven-eighths to 2 3/4 inches in the medium-high price range. It was interesting to note that the two deepest hems were both found in the dresses priced at \$14.95.

TABLE XI summarizes the information regarding the method of setting in sleeves of the dresses as found in the three price ranges of this study. The set of the sleeve is characteristic of good quality. There were two methods used to set in the sleeves, the open sleeve method and the closed sleeve method. The open sleeve method has its advantages when a great deal of fitting is needed on a dress; but in general it is not a strong finish and is used on inexpensive dresses.⁷

7. E. B. Weiss, The Shopping Guide. New York: McGraw, 1937, p. 248.

TABLE XI

SLEEVES

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Method of setting in sleeve | | | |
| open sleeve | 45 | 14 | 0 |
| closed sleeve | 4 | 20 | 46 |
| dolman sleeve | 0 | 1 | 0 |

This study would tend to prove the statement that the set of the sleeve is characteristic of good quality as there were four out of forty-nine dresses in the low price range, twenty out of thirty-four in the medium price range, and forty-six out of forty-six in the medium-high price range that used the closed sleeve method.

TABLE XII summarizes the information regarding the shoulder pads of dresses as found in the three price ranges of this study. The quality of shoulder pads in the dresses did not vary very much in any price range. However the pads that were best made were found in one make of dresses that ranged in price from \$19.95 - \$29.95.

TABLE XII

SHOULDER PADS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Shoulder pads: | | | |
| easily removed | 45 | 35 | 41 |
| sewed in | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| snapped | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| color suitable | 45 | 30 | 40 |
| color not suitable | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| style poor | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| puckered | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| thin covers | 0 | 0 | 3 |

There were only seven sets of pads that were stitched into the arms-eye seam. Two of these dresses were in the low price range and five were in

the medium-high price range. Only two dresses had pads that were snapped in. Both of these dresses were labeled unconditionally washable. There were eleven dresses with shoulder pads that were not suitable in color because they neither matched nor blended. One dress had very poorly constructed shoulder pads. All of the poor shoulder pads were found in dresses that were priced at \$25 or above and were in dresses made by the same company.

"The quality of the dresses and the wear that can be expected from them are indicated by the manner in which the seams are stitched and finished."⁸

TABLE XIII summarizes the information regarding the side seam widths and finish on the dresses, as found in the three price ranges of this study. The material from which the dress is made will determine the best width and finish of the seams.⁹ With these factors in mind, pinked seams give the best service when the edges are left wide enough. Usually the width may vary from one-half to three-fourths of an inch.¹⁰

TABLE XIII

SIDE SEAM WIDTHS AND FINISHES

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$29.95 |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Seams: | | | |
| finishes | | | |
| pinked | 49 | 30 | 37 |
| overcast | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| edge stitched back | 0 | 0 | 4 |

8. Ruth Brindze, op. cit., p. 93

9. Weiss, op. cit., p. 248.

10. "Things to Look for When Choosing Your Summer Dresses," Good Housekeeping, 122:150, May, 1946.

TABLE XIII
(Continued)

| Widths: | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|
| 1/8" | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/4" | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 3/8" | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 1/2" | 14 | 15 | 15 |
| 5/8" | 19 | 9 | 12 |
| 3/4" | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| 7/8" | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 1" | 1 | 0 | 1 |

In the low price range 84 per cent of the side seams met the minimum standard of one-half inch, 89 per cent in the medium price range and 81 per cent in the medium-high price range had side seams that met the minimum standard. This shows no improvement with price as the per cent of dresses in the medium-high price range had a large per cent of side seams that met the standard.

In the low price range all of the side seams were pinked. In the medium price range all of the seams were pinked except the 14 per cent that were overcast. In the medium-high price range 81 per cent of the side seams were pinked, 11 per cent were overcast, and 9 per cent had the edges of the seams stitched back. The medium-high price range shows a slight improvement in price since this price range used two finishes that would prevent all raveling.

TABLE XIV summarizes the information regarding the width of armseye seams of the dresses, as found in the three price ranges of the study. The stitching around the armseye should not be wavy or run too near the edge of the seam.¹¹

¹¹. Weiss, op. cit., p. 248.

TABLE XIV

WIDTH OF ARMSEYE SEAMS

| Price ranges | \$7.95 - \$15.95 | \$16.95 - \$22.95 | \$24.95 - \$39.95 |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 49 | 35 | 46 |
| Armseye Seams: | | | |
| Finishes | | | |
| overcast | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| double stitched | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| pinked | 8 | 3 | 10 |
| none | 40 | 28 | 18 |
| Widths | | | |
| 1/8" | 1 | 4 | 14 |
| 1/4" | 7 | 9 | 8 |
| 1/2" | 32 | 20 | 23 |
| 3/8" | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| 5/8" | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 3/4" | 0 | 0 | 2 |

In the low price range 65 per cent of the armseye seams met the minimum standard of one-half inch, in the medium price range 45 per cent met the minimum standard, and in the medium-high price range 21 per cent met the minimum standard of one-half inch.

There were two finishes used on the armseye seams of the dresses in the low and medium price ranges. The dresses in the medium-high price range used three seam finishes. This shows an improvement in quality, as well as the fact that 39 per cent of the armseye seams in the medium-high price range were not finished, against 81 per cent in the medium price range, and 80 per cent in the low price range.

TABLE XV summarizes the information regarding the comparison of price with construction of the dresses in the three price ranges of this study. To summarize, it was found that price had something to do with construction, but that a good dress could be found in the low price range if care was used in its selection. A very poor dress could be found in both the medium and the medium-high price ranges but there were fewer chances of getting a

poor dress in these price ranges.

TABLE XV

SUMMARY : COMPARISON OF PRICE WITH CONSTRUCTION

| QUALITY RATING | BETTER THAN OTHERS | EQUAL TO EACH OTHER |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| LABELS | low | medium, medium-high |
| MATERIAL | _____ | medium, medium-high |
| BELTS | medium-high | _____ |
| BELT LOOPS | _____ | medium, medium-high |
| BELT FASTENERS | _____ | low, medium, medium-high |
| BUTTONS | _____ | low, medium, medium-high |
| THREAD | medium-high | _____ |
| ZIPPERS | medium-high | _____ |
| STITCHING | medium | _____ |
| BUTTONHOLES | medium-high | _____ |
| HEM WIDTH | _____ | low, medium, medium-high |
| SLEEVES | medium-high | _____ |
| SHOULDER PADS | _____ | low, medium, medium-high |
| SIDE SEAM WIDTH | medium | _____ |
| SIDE SEAM FINISH | medium-high | _____ |
| ARMSEYE SEAM WIDTH | low | _____ |
| ARMSEYE SEAM FINISH | medium-high | _____ |
| POCKETS | _____ | low, medium, medium-high |
| DECORATIONS | _____ | medium, medium-high |

CHAPTER III

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE COMPANIES

Company A made dresses of five different prices. The lowest priced dresses were \$7.95. There were two of these dresses and each was labeled. One of the dresses was washable and was finished with the Everized finish. The other dress was drycleanable but required measuring before and after cleaning. The belt buckles on these dresses were covered, and the eyelets on the belts were worked.

The items that did not meet the standards of a good dress were as follows: (1) the armseye seams varied from one-fourth to one-half inch in width; (2) the hems were finished without tape; (3) the sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method; (4) the pleats were not well reinforced; (5) the belts on these dresses were unlined and the belt loops were too long; and (6) the buttonholes were thinly worked.

There was a label on two of the three \$8.95 dresses. Like the \$7.95 dresses, the belts were not lined and the belt loops were too long. The buttonholes were thinly worked. There was a pucker in the zipper seam and the armseye seam was less than one-half inch in one of the dresses. The side seams met the minimum standard of one-half inch.

There were four \$10.95 dresses. Two of these dresses had labels and two did not. The labels on the two dresses stated that the fabrics were Everized. Three of the belts were unlined and one was lined. There were two dresses with good worked buttonholes and two with buttonholes that had been worked too thinly. All of the seams met the standard of a good dress. The stitching was straight but the thread used on one dress was too light.

Two \$12.95 dresses had fly fronts. Both of the dresses were washable and one was Everized. The belt on one dress was lined. The buttonholes on both dresses were well worked. All of the seams were one-half inch wide. The shoulder pads were tacked in one dress. One dress had well reinforced roomy pockets. The hems on the \$12.95 dresses were one-fourth inch longer than those of the \$10.95 dresses. The poor points of construction were: (1) the belt on one dress was unlined; (2) the belt loops were too long; (3) the side seams were only one-half inch wide on the \$12.95 dresses; and (4) the shoulder pads in one dress were stitched into the armseye.

Of the five dresses in the \$16.95 group, there were three dresses with labels. Two of the dresses were drycleanable and one was washable and Everized. The belt loops were the right length on two of the dresses. One dress had lined, roomy pockets. Three dresses had good worked buttonholes. The side seams were one-eighth inch wider than they were in the \$14.95 dresses. The hems in all of these dresses were taped.

The items that did not meet the standards of a good dress were as follows: (1) belt loops on three out of five dresses were too long; (2) two of the belts were unlined; (3) buttonholes on two dresses were too thin; (4) the side seams were only one-half inch wide; and (5) sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method.

TABLE XVI summarizes the information regarding all the dresses within Company A.

TABLE XVI

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY A

| | LOW | | MEDIUM |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| | \$7.95 - | \$14.95 | \$16.95 |
| Number of dresses | 9 | | 5 |
| BELTS - unlined | 7 | | 2 |
| lined | 2 | | 3 |
| BELT LOOPS - too large | 9 | | 3 |
| right | 0 | | 2 |
| BUCKLES - covered | 9 | | 4 |
| metal | 0 | | 1 |
| BUTTONHOLES - worked thin | 5 | | 2 |
| worked well | 4 | | 3 |
| HEMS - no tape | 9 | | 1 |
| taped | 0 | | 4 |
| SHOULDER SEAMS - closed | 9 | | 5 |
| taped | 9 | | 5 |
| WAISTLINE - taped | 9 | | 5 |
| less than 1/2" | 9 | | 5 |
| SIDE SEAMS - 1/2" or above | 9 | | 5 |
| SLEEVES - open | 9 | | 5 |
| ARMSEYE SEAMS - 1/2" or above | 5 | | 5 |
| below 1/2" | 4 | | 0 |
| ZIPPERS - 10" underarm | 7 | | 3 |
| open front | 2 | | 2 |
| LABELS - washable | 2 | | 0 |
| dry-clean | 1 | | 2 |
| finish | 4 | | 1 |
| no label | 3 | | 1 |
| STITCHING - straight | 9 | | 5 |
| number good | 9 | | 5 |
| THREAD - correct | 8 | | 5 |
| too light | 1 | | 0 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked in | 8 | | 5 |
| stitched in | 1 | | 0 |
| POCKETS - roomy | 1 | | 1 |
| DECORATIONS | 0 | | 0 |

Company B was composed of thirteen dresses which were priced from \$8.95 through \$14.95. There were two \$8.95 dresses, one of which was labeled drycleanable and the other had no label. The belt loops were too long on one dress. There was no hem tape used on either dress. The sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method but in every other way these dresses met the standard of a good dress.

Two of the three \$10.95 dresses were drycleanable, and two had leatherized belts. There was no information given to tell whether the belts were drycleanable. The buttonholes on these dresses were well worked buttonholes. There was one dress with pockets and they were reinforced. The following points did not meet the standard of a good dress: (1) stitching was too long; (2) thread used on one dress was too light; (3) belt loops on two dresses were too long; (4) no tape was used on the hems; and (5) sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method.

One dress out of four priced at \$12.95 had a leather belt. This is the first time that a leather belt was used on any of the dresses. Two of the \$12.95 dresses had labels that stated that the dresses were washable. These dresses also had their shoulder pads snapped into the armseye seam. The hems in the \$12.95 dresses were one-fourth inch wider than in the \$10.95 dresses. The following points did not meet the standards of a good dress: (1) one dress had sleeves that were puckered where they were stitched into the armseye; (2) one dress had a bad flaw in the material of the skirt; (3) one zipper was not stitched across either end and one had a zipper stitched across only one end; and (4) the sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method.

In the four \$14.95 dresses only two had labels. Both of these dresses were drycleanable. In the following ways the dresses did not meet the standards of a good dress: (1) one of the belts was unlined;

(2) one set of belt loops was too long; (3) one dress had thread that was too light; (4) two of the sleeves were puckered where they were stitched into the armseye; and (5) the sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method.

All of the dresses made by this manufacturer had open shoulder seams that were not taped, hems taped on all but the three \$10.95 dresses, sleeves that were put in by the open sleeve method, and seven out of eleven belts that were leatherized.

The fifteen dresses of Company C ranged in price from \$10.95 to \$16.95. Three of the four \$10.95 dresses had labels which stated that the dresses must be drycleaned but no adjustment would be made if the dresses were ruined with a deodorant. The two-piece dresses in this trade-name group were the only ones that had skirts without bands. One of the one-piece dresses had a belt without a lining and one set of belt loops were too long. Two of the \$10.95 dresses had buttonholes that were too thinly worked. One of the dresses had no hem. The waistline seams, armseye seams, and side seams were below the standard of one-half inch.

The two-piece dresses in this trade-name group were the only dresses in the whole group of 130 dresses that had skirts without bands. A straight piece of cloth with the selvedge was used as the finish for the top of the skirt. One of these dresses was priced at \$10.95 and the other at \$12.95. There was only one \$12.95 dress that needed a belt. The belt on this dress was leatherized but was sticky on the back. The belt loops were too long and the buttonholes were thinly worked. The waistline seams and the armseye seams were too narrow on all of the dresses.

The \$14.95 dresses had all the characteristics of the \$12.95 dresses except that all of them had waistline seams of one-half inch which is the standard width. One of the dresses must be drycleaned and when ironed must be ironed on the wrong side without the use of a damp cloth.

One of the \$16.95 dresses was labeled washable, but the other three had no labels. One of the belts was lined with paper, and one skirt had no band. The shoulder seams, waistline seams, side seams, and armseye seams were too small in all of the dresses of this group. One of the side front seams on the skirt of a \$16.95 dress was gathered in to fit the next gore.

TABLE XVII summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company C.

TABLE XVII

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY C

| | LOW \$10.95-\$14.95 | MEDIUM \$16.95 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 11 | 4 |
| BELTS - leatherized (1 sticky) | 3 | 1 |
| no lining | 1 | 0 |
| no belt | 4 | 2 |
| plastic | 1 | 1 |
| paper lining | 0 | 1 |
| BELT LOOPS - too large | 3 | 1 |
| right | 1 | 1 |
| none | 7 | 2 |
| BUCKLES - none | 8 | 2 |
| metal | 1 | 1 |
| snapped | 1 | 0 |
| BUTTONHOLES - none | 3 | 0 |
| worked thin | 8 | 2 |
| good | 0 | 2 |
| BUTTONS - plastic | 1 | 1 |
| covered | 2 | 3 |
| metal | 2 | 0 |
| bone | 2 | 0 |
| HEMS - no tape | 2 | 0 |
| taped | 9 | 4 |
| machine stitched | 1 | 0 |
| no hem | 1 | 0 |
| 2" hem | 10 | 0 |
| 1 7/8" | 0 | 1 |
| SHOULDER SEAMS - 1/2" plain | 11 | 2 |
| 3/8" | 0 | 1 |

TABLE XVII
(Continued)

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|---|
| WAISTLINE - 1/4" no tape | 4 | 0 |
| 3/8" no tape | 3 | 1 |
| 1/2" no tape | 1 | 0 |
| 1/2" taped | 1 | 1 |
| SIDE SEAMS - 3/8" pinked | 4 | 0 |
| 1/2" pinked | 7 | 0 |
| 1/4" | 0 | 1 |
| 5/8" | 0 | 3 |
| ARMSEYE - 1/4" pinked | 7 | 4 |
| 3/8" pinked | 4 | 0 |
| SLEEVE - open method | 11 | 4 |
| ZIPPER - 10" underarm | 7 | 2 |
| 7" skirt | 3 | 2 |
| open front | 1 | 0 |
| LABELS - none | 5 | 3 |
| dry-clean | 6 | 0 |
| washable | 0 | 1 |
| STITCHING - good | 9 | 4 |
| crooked | 1 | 0 |
| length varies | 1 | 0 |
| THREAD - good | 11 | 4 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked | 11 | 4 |
| POCKETS - roomy | 3 | 1 |
| none | 8 | 3 |
| DECORATIONS - none | 11 | 4 |

The characteristics of the dresses made by this trade-name company are: (1) all of the dresses were cut by standard measurements set up by the government (according to information received from the buyer); (2) the width of the seams were below the standard of one-half inch; (3) the belts were below the standard; (4) darts were trimmed and also clipped too close to the seams; (5) sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method; (6) waistlines were not stayed; (7) some skirts had no band and the others had pieced bands; (8) hems were taped and blindstitched by machine except

on the skirt that had the hem put in with a machine stitch; and (9) no adjustment would be made if any of the dresses were ruined by the use of a deodorant.

The six dresses in Company D varied in price from \$12.95 - \$17.95. None of these dresses had labels. All of them had poorly shaped shoulder pads. The dresses in this group were stitched with an unusually long stitch and only one of them used the correct color of thread. The \$12.95, \$15.95, and \$17.95 dresses had the same characteristics. The \$14.95 dresses were the only dresses of this group that had belt loops of the correct length, good buttonholes, seams of standard width in the waistline, in the armseye and in the side seams.

All of the dresses manufactured by this Company had (1) open shoulder seams, (2) sleeves put in by the open sleeve method, (3) thread that was too light, (4) a mixture of threads used on the hem tape, (5) stitches that were too long, and (6) belts that were leatherized.

TABLE XVIII summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company D.

TABLE XVIII

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY D

| | LOW \$12.95 - \$15.95 | MEDIUM \$17.95 |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 5 | 1 |
| BELTS - leatherized | 5 | 1 |
| BELT LOOPS - too large | 3 | 1 |
| right | 2 | 0 |
| BUCKLES - metal | 2 | 0 |
| covered | 3 | 1 |
| BUTTONHOLES - poor | 2 | 1 |
| good | 2 | 0 |
| none | 1 | 0 |
| HEMS - taped | 5 | 1 |

TABLE XVIII
(Continued)

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| SHOULDER SEAMS - 1/2" no finish | 5 | 1 |
| WAISTLINE - 1/8" to 3/8" | 2 | 1 |
| 1/2" | 3 | 0 |
| SIDSEAMS - 3/8" | 1 | 1 |
| 1/2" | 3 | 0 |
| 1/8" | 1 | 0 |
| ARMSEYE - 1/8" | 1 | 0 |
| 1/4" | 1 | 0 |
| 1/2" | 3 | 1 |
| ZIPPER - 10" underarm | 5 | 1 |
| LABELS - none | 5 | 1 |
| STITCHES - too long | 5 | 1 |
| THREAD - too light | 4 | 1 |
| right | 1 | 0 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked | 5 | 1 |
| POCKETS - roomy | 1 | 0 |
| DECORATIONS - none | 5 | 1 |

Company E was composed of nine dresses priced from \$12.95 - \$16.95. These were junior dresses and were manufactured by the same company as the dresses of Company A. The belt on the only \$12.95 dress had a thin lining. The waistline was taped and the seam was one-half inch in width. The belt loops on this dress were too long; the hem was 1 7/8 inches deep and had no tape used on the edge.

One of the \$14.95 dresses had a label stating that the dress was drycleanable. One of the belts in these dresses had no lining but all of their belt loops were the correct length. One of the dresses had bias loops for buttonholes. This was the only use of bias loops in the low price dresses.

Two of the five dresses priced at \$16.95 had labels that stated that the dresses should be drycleaned but must be measured before and after

cleaning and must be ironed on the wrong side. Two of the dresses had belt loops that were too long, and two other dresses had poorly worked button-holes. One of the \$16.95 dresses had a puckered place on the neck edge.

These dresses had the same characteristics as the dresses in Company A with the exception of the use of tape on the \$12.95 dresses as well as those above that price.

TABLE XIX summarizes the information regarding the dresses in Company E.

TABLE XIX

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY E

| | LOW \$12.95 - \$14.95 | MEDIUM \$16.95 |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of dresses | 4 | 5 |
| BELTS - thin lining | 1 | 2 |
| no lining | 1 | 0 |
| imitation leather | 1 | 1 |
| lined | 1 | 2 |
| BELT LOOPS - too large | 1 | 2 |
| right | 3 | 1 |
| BUCKLES - covered | 2 | 3 |
| metal | 1 | 0 |
| BUTTONHOLES - good | 2 | 2 |
| bias loops | 1 | 0 |
| worked poor | 0 | 2 |
| BUTTONS - covered | 2 | 0 |
| metal | 1 | 1 |
| plastic | 1 | 1 |
| pearl | 0 | 2 |
| HEMS - with tape-1 7/8" | 3 | 5 |
| no tape-1 7/8" | 1 | 0 |
| SHOULDERS - taped-1/2" | 3 | 0 |
| 3/8" | 0 | 5 |
| WAISTLINE - 1/2" pinked | 3 | 3 |
| 1/2" overcast | 1 | 0 |
| 1/2" taped | 0 | 1 |
| SLEEVES - open method | 4 | 5 |

TABLE XIX
(Continued)

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| SIDE SEAMS - 1/2" to 3/4" pinked | 1 | 0 |
| 5/8" pinked | 3 | 5 |
| ARMSEYE - 1/2" pinked | 2 | 3 |
| 1/2" overcast | 1 | 0 |
| 5/8" pinked | 0 | 1 |
| 3/8" pinked | 0 | 1 |
| ZIPPERS - 10" underarm | 1 | 3 |
| 7" skirt | 2 | 2 |
| LABELS - none | 2 | 3 |
| dry-clean | 2 | 2 |
| STITCHING - good | 4 | 5 |
| THREAD - good | 4 | 5 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked | 4 | 5 |
| POCKETS - none | 3 | 4 |
| roomy-reinforced | 0 | 1 |
| DECORATIONS - none | 4 | 5 |

There were only two dresses in Company F. They were priced at \$14.95. Only one of these dresses was drycleanable. There was no dress in this group that needed a belt. The buttonholes were worked too thinly and were worked with thread that was too light. The waistline seam, the armseye seam and the side seams were three-eighths of an inch in width. The sleeves in the dresses were put in by the closed sleeve method and the shoulder seams were bound together. The hems had tape on them but it was not put on well. The stitches were the correct length and the thread was the correct color on both of the dresses.

There were three dresses in Company G. One was \$14.95 and two were \$17.95. There was no belt on the \$14.95 dress. One of the \$17.95 dresses required a belt. The belt loops on this dress were too long. The shoulder seams on one of the \$17.95 dresses were too narrow and the side seams on the other \$17.95 dress were too narrow. Each of the three dresses had

waistline seams that were taped but were too narrow. The sleeves on these dresses were put in by the closed sleeve method; the shoulder seams were opened; and all the hems were taped. The dresses in this trade-name group were the only dresses that had a guard behind the skirt zipper.

In Company H the ten trade-name dresses were all made of knit material and were priced from \$17.95 - \$29.95. Two of the dresses had elastic inset belts. These dresses were priced at \$17.95 and \$22.95. There were only two dresses with belt loops of the correct length. One of these dresses was priced at \$22.95 and the other was \$25. All of the dresses had labels that stated that the dresses were drycleanable and had a special finish called Fulura. The belts on these dresses were varied in style but were good belts. These dresses had tape used on the hems. The shoulder seams were taped and overcast. This finish was used to avoid rolling of seams. The armseye seams were overcast but not taped. There were three finishes used on the waistline seams: (1) taped, (2) three rows of stitching, and (3) overcast. The side seams were overcast but the other skirt seams were not finished and neither were the crosswise seams. One \$25 and one \$29.95 dress had waistline seams of three-eighths inch in width. The armseye seams were less than one-half inch on all but the \$22.95 dresses.

These dresses fell below the standard of a good dress by having their waistline and armseye seams below the standard width.

TABLE XX summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company H.

TABLE XX

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTIONS WITHIN COMPANY H

| | MEDIUM \$17.95 - \$25 | MEDIUM-HIGH \$29.95 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of dresses | 5 | 5 |
| BELTS - leather | 1 | 2 |
| leatherized | 1 | 0 |
| elastic inset | 2 | 0 |
| none | 1 | 0 |
| lined | 0 | 1 |
| BELT LOOPS - none | 3 | 2 |
| too long | 1 | 2 |
| right | 1 | 1 |
| BUCKLE - none | 3 | 2 |
| metal | 1 | 1 |
| leather | 1 | 0 |
| covered | 0 | 2 |
| BUTTONHOLES - worked eyelets | 4 | 4 |
| none | 1 | 0 |
| bound | 0 | 1 |
| BUTTONS - covered | 2 | 1 |
| metal | 1 | 2 |
| plastic | 1 | 0 |
| bone | 0 | 1 |
| glass | 0 | 1 |
| none | 1 | 0 |
| HEMS - with tape 2" | 5 | 5 |
| WAISTLINE - taped 1/2" | 1 | 0 |
| elastic (overcast) | 2 | 0 |
| 3 rows stitching | 1 | 0 |
| 1/2" no tape | 0 | 1 |
| 3/8" overcast | 0 | 2 |
| 1/2" overcast | 0 | 1 |
| SLEEVES - closed | 5 | 5 |
| SIDE SEAMS - 1/2" overcast | 5 | 4 |
| 5/8" overcast | 0 | 1 |
| ARMSEYE - 1/4" overcast | 4 | 1 |
| 1/2" overcast | 1 | 0 |
| 3/8" | 0 | 3 |

TABLE XX
(Continued)

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| ZIPPERS - none | 2 | 0 |
| 7" skirt | 2 | 0 |
| 10" underarm | 1 | 0 |
| 8" two | 0 | 2 |
| 10" | 0 | 2 |
| fly front | 0 | 1 |
| LABELS - finish | 5 | 5 |
| dry-clean | 5 | 5 |
| STITCHING - good | 5 | 5 |
| THREAD - good | 5 | 5 |
| SHOULDER PADS - good | 5 | 5 |
| POCKETS - none | 4 | 4 |
| reinforced | 1 | 1 |

The six dresses in Company I varied in price from \$19.95 - \$29.95. One of the \$19.95 dresses had a fashion label but the others had no labels. The belt on the \$29.95 dress was backed with real leather. The belt loops were the right length on all the dresses except the one priced at \$24.95. All of the buttonholes in these dresses were well made. The \$19.95 dress had bound buttonholes and the others had tailored buttonholes. The \$19.95 and one \$22.95 dress had metal buttons; the other \$22.95 dress had covered buttons; and the \$24.95 dress had pearl buttons. All of the hems were taped and varied in depth from two to 2 1/2 inches. The shoulder seams on the \$19.95 dresses were not taped but the \$22.95 and the \$29.95 dresses had tape used half way the seam. All of the waistline seams were taped but the edge of the seams were not finished. The side seams were three-fourths of an inch wide or wider. The armseye seam in one of the \$22.95 dresses varied from one-fourth to one-half of an inch in width and from three-eighths to one-half of an inch on another \$22.95 dress. One \$19.95 dress had three-eighths of an inch armseye seams but all of the other dresses had armseye seams of one-half inch. None of the dresses in this trade-name group used

zippers as all of the dresses were sport dresses and were opened down the front.

TABLE XXI summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company I.

TABLE XXI

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY I

| | MEDIUM \$19.95 - \$24.95 | MEDIUM-HIGH \$29.95 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of dresses | 5 | 1 |
| BELTS - leatherized | 5 | 0 |
| leather backing | 0 | 1 |
| BELT LOOPS - right | 4 | 1 |
| too large | 1 | 0 |
| BUCKLES - covered | 4 | 1 |
| BUTTONHOLES - bound | 1 | 0 |
| tailored | 4 | 1 |
| BUTTONS - metal | 4 | 1 |
| pearl | 1 | 0 |
| HEMS - taped | 5 | 1 |
| SHOULDER SEAMS - no tape | 2 | 0 |
| taped one-half way | 3 | 1 |
| WAISTLINE - taped | 5 | 1 |
| SIDE SEAMS - 3/4" or above | 5 | 1 |
| ARMSEYE - less than 1/2" | 3 | 0 |
| 1/2" | 2 | 0 |
| 3/4" | 0 | 1 |
| ZIPPERS - none | 0 | 0 |
| open front | 5 | 1 |
| LABELS - none | 5 | 1 |
| STITCHING - good | 5 | 1 |
| THREAD - good | 4 | 1 |
| poor | 1 | 0 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked | 5 | 1 |
| POCKETS - none | 0 | 0 |
| DECORATIONS | 0 | 0 |

In Company J only one dress of the four dresses priced from \$22.95 - \$29.95 had open shoulder seams of the correct width. This dress was priced at \$22.95. It had a zipper in the neck opening as well as in the placket opening. The hems on the dresses were taped. There were no labels on any of these dresses. For decorations they had large bows on the shoulders, on the waistline, and below the waistline. The \$22.95 dress had a zipper in the neck opening as well as in the side opening. The \$22.95 dresses fell below the standard because: (1) the stitching around the placket zippers was crooked; (2) the stitches were too long; and (3) the thread was too light. On one \$22.95 dress the seams were too narrow.

The \$25 dress had a patent leather belt with loops that were too long. The shoulder seams on this dress were one-half inch wide and were closed. The waistline seams were one-half inch, but the side seams had been pinked unevenly so that they were one-fourth inch in places. The thread used on the dress was the correct color, and the stitches were of a satisfactory length. This dress was not decorated.

The \$29.95 dress had no belt. The shoulder seams were one-half inch wide and were opened. The waistline was taped but was only one-fourth inch wide. The side seams varied from one-fourth to one-eighth of an inch in width. The stitching on this dress was good but the thread on the bobbin was a different color from the top thread and both threads were too light. This dress was decorated with bunches of sequins scattered over the entire dress.

These dresses fell below the standard of a good dress by having some of its waistline, side seams, and armseye seams below one-half inch in width. The thread used on two of these dresses was too light.

TABLE XXII summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company J.

TABLE XXII

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY J

| | MEDIUM \$22.95 - \$25.00 | MEDIUM-HIGH \$29.95 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of dresses | 2 | 2 |
| BELTS - none | 2 | 1 |
| patent leather | 0 | 1 |
| BELT LOOPS - none | 2 | 1 |
| too large | 0 | 1 |
| BUCKLES - none | 2 | 1 |
| patent leather | 0 | 1 |
| BUTTONHOLES - none | 2 | 2 |
| BUTTONS - none | 2 | 2 |
| HEMS - taped | 2 | 2 |
| 2 1/4" | 2 | 0 |
| 2 1/2" | 0 | 1 |
| 2 3/4" | 0 | 1 |
| SHOULDER SEAMS - 1/2" taped | 2 | 2 |
| WAISTLINE SEAMS - 1/2" taped | 2 | 1 |
| 1/4" taped | 0 | 1 |
| SIDE SEAMS - 1/4" | 1 | 1 |
| 1/2" | 1 | 0 |
| 3/8" | 0 | 1 |
| ARMSEYE - 1/4" | 1 | 1 |
| 1/2" | 1 | 0 |
| 1/8" | 0 | 1 |
| ZIPPER - 6" neck | 2 | 0 |
| 12" placket | 2 | 2 |
| LABELS - none | 2 | 2 |
| STITCHES - crooked | 2 | 1 |
| too long | 2 | 0 |
| THREAD - good | 1 | 1 |
| too light | 1 | 1 |
| bobbin different | 0 | 1 |
| SHOULDER PADS - tacked | 2 | 2 |
| POCKETS - none | 2 | 2 |
| DECORATIONS - pin | 1 | 0 |
| bow | 1 | 0 |
| sequins | 0 | 1 |

There were seventeen dresses in Company K which varied in price from \$14.95 - \$29.95. In addition to making street dresses and dressy dresses, this company also made evening dresses. Only two of the dresses in the whole group required belts. They were both \$14.95 dresses and both had leatherized belts and belt loops of the correct length.

There was an equal number of covered and metal buttons used on the dresses. The price had nothing to do with the type of buttons. There were two extra covered buttons given with each of the \$22.95 and the \$25 dress. All of the buttonholes were good from the \$19.95 through the \$29.95 dresses.

The depth of the hems seemed to have nothing to do with the price since the deepest hems came in the \$14.95 dresses and the shortest one came in the \$29.95 dress. All of the shoulder seams were opened except in one \$14.95 dress and the seams were one-half inch in all dresses except in one \$17.95 dress. None of the shoulder seams on any of the dresses were taped.

All of the side seams met the standard of one-half inch or over except in one \$29.95 dress. These side seams vary from one-fourth to three-eighths of an inch in width. The armseye seams did not meet the standard of one-half inch in one of the \$17.95 dresses, one of the \$19.95 dresses, and one of the \$22.95 dresses, and one \$25 dress. All of the waistline seams in the \$14.95 dresses were taped but no other waistline seams were taped. There was only one waistline that was below one-half inch in width. It was three-eighths inch in width. The sleeves in all of this group of dresses were put in by the closed sleeve method. All of the zippers in the underarm plackets were twelve inches long and in the skirts were seven inches long.

Seven of the dresses had fashion labels but the other dresses had no labels. Only one dress had crooked stitching and it was found on a

\$25 dress. In one \$22.95 dress, the thread used in stitching was too dark.

The shoulder pads were above the average in quality in this group of dresses.

Decorations were found on the dresses priced at \$19.95, \$22.95, and \$25. Satin was used as the decoration on three dresses, fur on one, satin braid on one, and a pin with a large chain on the other. Two of the \$17.95 dresses had pockets and two of the \$22.95 dresses had cuffs.

TABLE XXIII summarizes the information regarding the dresses of Company K.

TABLE XXIII

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION WITHIN COMPANY K

| | LOW PRICE \$14.95 | | MEDIUM PRICE \$17.95 - \$22.95 | | MEDIUM-HIGH PRICE \$25 - \$29.95 | |
|----------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| | 4 | | 8 | | 5 | |
| BELTS | none | 2 | none | 8 | none | 5 |
| | leatherized | 2 | | | | |
| BELT LOOPS | none | 2 | none | 7 | none | 5 |
| BUTTONS | covered | 1 | covered | 3 | covered | 1 |
| | none | 3 | metal | 2 | metal | 2 |
| | | | none | 3 | none | 2 |
| BUTTONHOLES | poor | 1 | poor | 1 | poor | 0 |
| | none | 3 | none | 3 | none | 2 |
| | | | good | 3 | good | 2 |
| | | | snaps | 1 | bias loops | 1 |
| HEMS | 1 7/8" | 1 | 1 7/8" | 1 | 7/8" | 1 |
| | 2" | 2 | 2" | 5 | 1" | 1 |
| | 3" | 1 | 2 7/8" | 1 | 1 1/2" | 1 |
| | | | 2 3/4" | 1 | | |
| SHOULDER SEAMS | 3/8" no tape | 1 | 1/2" | 8 | 1/2" | 5 |
| | 1/2" no tape | 3 | | | | |
| WAISTLINE | 1/2" taped | 4 | 3/8" no tape | 1 | | |
| | | | 1/2" no tape | 1 | 1/2" no tape | 2 |
| | | | none | 6 | none | 3 |
| SIDE SEAMS | 1/2" pinked | 2 | 1/2" | 2 | 1/4" | 1 |
| | 3/4" pinked | 2 | 3/4" | 5 | 3/4" | 4 |

TABLE XXIII
(Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----|----------------|---|----------------|---|
| SLEEVES | closed method | 4 | closed method | 8 | closed method | 5 |
| ARMSEYE | 1/2" | 3 | 1/4" | 3 | 1/4" | 1 |
| | 5/8" | 1 | 3/8" | 1 | 3/4" | 4 |
| ZIPPER | 12" | 3 | 12" | 1 | 12" | 2 |
| | open front | 1 | open front | 1 | open front | 0 |
| | | | 7" skirt | 5 | 7" skirt | 3 |
| | | | none | 1 | | |
| | | | neck opening | 1 | | |
| | | 16" | 1 | | | |
| LABELS | fashion | 4 | fashion | 8 | fashion | 4 |
| | | | | | none | 1 |
| STITCHING | good | 4 | good | 8 | good | 4 |
| THREAD | good | 4 | good | 7 | good | 5 |
| | | | too dark | 1 | | |
| SHOULDER PADS | easily removed | 4 | easily removed | 8 | easily removed | 5 |
| POCKETS | none | 4 | roomy | 2 | none | 5 |
| | | | none | 6 | | |
| DECORATIONS | none | 4 | braid | 1 | chain | 1 |
| | | | fur | 1 | satin | 1 |
| | | | satin | 1 | none | 2 |
| | | | pin | 1 | | |
| | | | none | 4 | | |

There were only two dresses in Company L. One of the dresses was priced at \$24.95 and the other at \$27.95. They were both two-piece dresses. All of the dresses made by this Company were made in women's sizes and were either two-piece dresses or costume dresses. According to the information received from the buyer, the store had a large number of these dresses but since only two bore the trade-name label they were the only ones used in this study. Neither of these dresses had a label other than the trade-name label but in every other way they met the standards of a good dress.

Of the nine dresses in Company M, ranging in price from \$25 through \$29.95, only one dress had any kind of belt. This belt was an inset belt

and was found in one of the \$25 dresses. Two of the dresses had narrow sashes which hung nearly to the hemline of the dress when tied. There were regular belt loops for the sashes to pass through. One set of these loops was too large but the others were the correct length.

Only one of these dresses used buttonholes. The buttonholes were worked with eyelets like those used for tailored garments. The buttons were covered with material to match the dress.

The waistline seams were only three-eighths of an inch in width in two dresses. One of these dresses was a \$25 dress and the other one was a \$29.95 dress. This was the only group of dresses that had sleeves put in by the closed method but had a continuous seam through the waistline and through the hem which was hemmed before the side was stitched.

The armseye seams were too small except on two of the \$29.95 dresses. These seams were one-half inch deep but were raveling and would probably not prove satisfactory after the dress had been worn a few times. The armseye seam in one of the dresses already had several broken stitches which would make it necessary to restitch the seam before wearing the dress.

There were four twenty-two inch zippers used on the \$25 dresses. All the zippers used on the plackets were twelve inches and on the skirts were seven inches. The stitches were too long on each dress. On the \$25 dress there were many gathering stitches showing. The stitches varied in length around the zippers and were also crooked. In the \$29.95 dresses the thread used on one dress was too light and on one of the other \$29.95 dresses the thread was too dark. The shoulder pads in this set of dresses were poorer than in any set of dresses. There was nothing consistent about the way they were made. Three of them had bound edges that were puckered, and the others had either raw seams or were made in such a way that the seam was inside the pad. The tops of the pads and the under side

of the pads were not made of the same material. There was no apparent reason for this except for the Company to save material as one side of the pad did not match the dress any better than the other. All of these dresses had neck facings but none of them fitted properly. They were either pulled or puckered. Three of the dresses in this group were decorated with taffeta bows and three with sequins.

To summarize, this group of dresses had the hems taped but the tape was put on very poorly. In some cases the seams were continuous from the sleeve through the hem. In this case the tape was stitched on the dress and hemmed finished before the side seams were stitched. The waistline seams and side seams in a majority of the dresses were the right size. The armseye seams were too small; the stitching around the zippers was crooked; and the stitches were too long.

Company N had eight dresses which ranged in price from \$29.95 through \$39.95. These were dresses of the dressy type. Only two of them required belts. One of the belts was found on a \$29.95 dress and the other on a \$35.95 dress. The belts were both leatherized and the belt loops were the correct length. The only two-piece dress was a \$29.95 dress. One of the dresses had worked buttonholes of a good quality. The buttons on this dress were bone. Three of the dresses had hems that were less than 1 7/8 inches but they all used tape on the edges. Two of the dresses were priced at \$35 and the other one was \$29.95.

The waistline finish varied in each price dress. The \$35 dresses had three kinds of finishes on the waistline; three of them were taped; one was double stitched without a tape; and the other had a plain seam.

One \$35 and two \$29 dresses had armseye seams of three-eighths inch but the others were one-half inch. None of these dresses had any labels. Only one dress had stitching that was too long and it was a \$35

dress. One of the \$29.95 dresses had a gold ornament and two of the \$35 dresses had large bows used as decorations. One of these bows was taffeta and the other satin.

In every other way these dresses met the standard of a good dress.

Company O had four dresses that were priced at \$29.95. None of the dresses had labels. All of them were dressy dresses. Two of the dresses required belts. One of the belts was made of the same material as the dress and the other was a patent leather belt. The belt loops for both of these belts were too long. One of the dresses had bound buttonholes and the other one had poorly worked buttonholes. The waistline on one of the dresses was three-eighths of an inch and was taped but the others met the standard of one-half inch.

Two of the dresses had side seams that were pinked to one-fourth of an inch; the other dress had five-eighths inch side seams. The arms-eye seams were one-fourth inch but they had two rows of stitching. One of these rows was one-fourth inch from the edge and the other one was just as close to the edge as was possible.

One of the dresses had a twenty-two inch zipper. The placket zippers were ten inches and eleven inches, and the skirt zipper was seven inches long. All of the dresses were decorated; one used beads, one velvet, and the other used lace.

Company P was composed of three \$35 dresses and two \$39.95 dresses. None of these dresses had labels. All of the belts in the \$35 dresses had linings and the belt loops were the correct size. The \$39.95 dresses were made so that they required no belts. None of the dresses had buttonholes. One dress had covered buttons but had bias loops for buttonholes. Four of the dresses had four zippers each, one at the neck opening, two at the wrists and the other in the side placket. One of the dresses had a very

attractive pin with green sets and a safety catch.

The side seams on the \$39.95 dress were three-eighths inch wide but the side seams on the other dresses were one-half inch or wider. The waistline and the armseye seams were one-half inch wide or wider. The hems were two to 2 1/2 inches wide with the tape.

Company Q was composed of five trade-name dresses which were priced from \$29.95 - \$39.95. None of these dresses had labels. The dresses in this trade-name group were all strictly sport dresses. Two of the dresses were two-piece dresses and the other three dresses were opened down the front. All of the belts were either leather or leather trimmed. The belt loops were too long on two dresses. The only cloth loops found on any of the dresses were found on one of the \$39.95 dresses and these loops were too small. The armseye seams were double stitched, but on one \$35 dress and one \$39.95 dress they were only one-fourth inch wide. The shoulder seams were opened and were found to be from three-fourths inch to five-eighths inch in width. The waistline seams were seven-eighths inch after the raw edges had been turned back and stitched. All of this stitching was straight except on the edge of one seam on one of the \$35 dresses. The thread used on all the dresses was the correct color.

To summarize, it was found that the only consistent change with price in a company was the finish of the hems. Tape was used on no dresses below \$12.95 but was used on a majority of the dresses above \$12.95.

CHAPTER IV

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION OF DRESSES BETWEEN COMPANIES

There were eight different companies in the low price range. One of the companies manufactured dresses for both women and juniors. All of the companies except this one manufactured dresses that had leatherized belts. This company had 86 per cent of its women's dress belts unlined and all the junior dress belts were lined with a thin fabric. Every company except one had some belts with loops of the correct length, but the greatest number of the loops were too long.

Only one company was consistent in the kind of belt buckles that were used. This company used all covered buckles while the other companies used both covered and metal buckles.

Out of the eight companies in the low price range, one was found to have all buttonholes well worked and one to have all buttonholes poorly worked. The other companies had just about as many well worked buttonholes as they had poor ones.

Tape was used on all the hems of all the dresses with the exception of those made by one company. This company used tape on the junior dresses but only on the \$16.95 dresses in the women's sizes. Four companies had closed shoulder seams; three had shoulder seams stayed in some way; and the other had closed seams that were not stayed.

One company had part of its waistlines stayed and part not stayed. The other seven companies had all of their waistlines stayed.

There were four companies with the side seams below the standard width of one-half inch and four companies with the armseye seams below the

standard.

Three of the companies put the sleeves in by the closed sleeve method and the other five used the open sleeve method.

The companies were consistent in the use of seven-inch zippers. Ten-inch zippers were used in the side plackets of all of the dresses except those made by one company. Their zippers were twelve inches. All of the companies had the correct length of stitch and all except one company had straight stitching. One company was consistent in the use of thread that was too light. There were three other companies that had one dress each stitched in thread that was too light.

The shoulder pads were tacked in the majority of the dresses but one company had the shoulder pads in two of their dresses snapped in. Another company had the shoulder pads in two of their dresses machine sewed to the armseye seam.

None of the companies were consistent in the kind of information that they gave on the labels. Only three dresses had the fabric finish given. These dresses were made by the same company and had the Everized finish.

There were pockets on seven dresses; each dress was made by a different company.

None of the dresses in this price range were decorated.

There were eleven companies in the medium price range. A great variation was found in the belts. All except one company had some leatherized belts. One company used one leather belt; another had a belt made of imitation leather; another had a patent leather belt; another had a belt lined with paper; and still another company had both lined and unlined belts.

Three of the companies had belt loops that were too long, and the

other had some loops that were too long as well as some of the correct length. The buckles varied within the company as well as between the companies. Metal and covered buckles were used by three companies, covered buckles by three companies, metal and leather buckles by one company, and metal buckles by one company. The eyelets on the belts also varied within the companies and between companies. Two companies used worked eyelets; two used both metal eyelets and punched holes with no finish; and the other companies used worked eyelets and punched holes without a finish.

There were two types of worked buttonholes used on the dresses. The one that occurred most frequently was the straight worked buttonhole. This buttonhole is alike at both ends. The other was a tailored or eyelet buttonhole and was used exclusively by two companies. These buttonholes were always worked well. The straight buttonholes were found to be good in dresses of the same price in one company and very poor in dresses made by another company. The other companies had a mixture of good and poor buttonholes.

All of the companies used many different types of buttons. There was no difference between the quality or type of buttons used by one company and those used by another. The type of material used in the dress seemed to have more to do with the type of button used than the price of the dress.

Only two companies were consistent in the size of the hem that they used. Their hems were two inches deep. The hems found on the other dresses varied from $1 \frac{7}{8}$ inches to $2 \frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Three of the companies were consistent in their use of closed shoulder seams that were taped. The other companies used untaped open shoulder seams. The waistline seams were taped by six companies. One company used overcasting and the others either pinked their waistlines or

left them without a finish. Only two companies had side seams that were too narrow, and six companies had armseye seams that were too narrow.

The sleeves were put in by the open sleeve method in dresses made by three companies and by the closed method in the other eight companies. There were two lengths of side placket zippers. Eight companies used ten-inch zippers and two used twelve-inch zippers. The other company used full length front openings. The skirt placket zippers were all seven inches long.

Three companies used thread that was too light on one dress each, and three companies used stitching that was too long on all of their dresses. Another company stitched its \$22.95 dress and its \$25 dress with a stitch that was too long. All of the shoulder pads in the medium priced dresses were good. Only three companies used any form of decorations on their medium price dresses. These decorations were of equal quality to those found in the more expensive dresses.

In the medium-high price range the dresses were made by ten different companies. There were two companies that had one dress each with an inset belt and two other companies that made their dresses in such a way as to require no belts. Three companies used lined belts; two companies used leatherized belts; and two companies used leather belts. There were only two companies that consistently used the correct length of belt loops; two had an even distribution between loops of the correct length and those that were too long. Three companies had only long loops. One of the companies had one set of loops made of cloth that were too short but their thread loops were too long.

None of the companies were consistent in the use of buckles. Two companies had covered buckles; two used either covered buckles or snaps instead of a buckle; one had both covered and metal buckles; and one had

both leather and metal buckles.

Two companies used no buttonholes; three companies used straight buttonholes of good quality; two had tailored buttonholes; and two had both worked and bound buttonholes. One company had only one dress that needed fasteners and this dress used bias cloth loops instead of buttonholes.

There was a variety of buttons used by all but two companies. These companies used covered buttons. One company used glass and bone; one used metal, covered, and bone; and three used pearl and covered buttons.

The depth of the hems varied in all of the companies. Taking the group as a whole, there were found to be hems that varied from seven-eighths to 2 7/8 inches in depth. The small hems were for the most part on dresses that had very full skirts and would, therefore, require a narrow hem.

Only one company had very poor shoulder pads. This company used sleazy materials on their shoulder pads, and in some instances the cloth did not match on the under and upper side of the shoulder pad. The same pads had bound edges that were puckered.

Five companies had waistline seams of less than one-half inch. Two of the companies had waistline seams that were one-fourth inch, and three companies had seams that were three-eighths inches in width. Only one company had side seams that were too small. These seams were not even but were as narrow as one-fourth inch in places and never wider than one-half inch.

One-half of the dresses in the medium-high price range had armseye seams that varied from one-eighth to one-fourth inch; three companies had seams from one-fourth to one-half inch but they were double stitched. The other company had armseye seams of three-eighths inch.

All of the sleeves were put in by the closed sleeve method. However one company made the side seam continuous from the armseye seam through the waistline seam.

Twelve-inch underarm placket zippers were used on all of the dresses. One company also used four twenty-two inch zippers down the center back. One company had neck zippers and wrist zippers in addition to the side placket. There was one company that used a long stitch for all of the stitching on its dresses. This company also had one dress stitched in thread that was too light and one dress stitched in thread that was too dark.

There was a great difference in the shoulder seams on the dresses made by five of the companies. These differences were as follows: one had one-half inch seams overcast and taped (knit dresses); one had one-half inch seams taped one-half of the way; one had part of their shoulder seams taped and the others plain; one had some of their shoulder seams closed and some opened; and the other dresses had shoulder seams that were as narrow as three-eighths inch in some places. These seams were double stitched.

To summarize, the differences between companies showed up in the finish of the hem, the finish of the seams, the method of putting in sleeves, type of buttonholes, number and length of zippers, and kind of shoulder pads.

TABLE XXIV summarizes the information regarding the price and construction of dresses between the companies in the three price ranges of this study.

TABLE XXIV

A COMPARISON OF PRICE AND CONSTRUCTION OF DRESSES BETWEEN COMPANIES

| COMPANIES | LOW | MEDIUM | MEDIUM-HIGH |
|------------------------------|-----|--------|-------------|
| COMPANIES | 8 | 11 | 10 |
| BELTS - leatherized | 7 | 10 | 2 |
| lined (some) | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| unlined (some) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| some leather | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| BELT LOOPS - some correct | 7 | 8 | 2 |
| too long | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| BUCKLES - covered | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| metal and leather | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| covered and metal | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| metal | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| BUTTONHOLES - well worked | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| poorly worked | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| good and poor | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| tailored | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| HEMS - taped | 7 | 11 | 10 |
| SHOULDER SEAMS - closed | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| stayed | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| open | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| WAISTLINE - stayed | 7 | 6 | 9 |
| part stayed | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| SIDE SEAMS - below standard | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| met standard | 5 | 9 | 8 |
| ARMSEYE - below standard | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| met standard | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| SLEEVES - closed | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| open | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| ZIPPERS - 10" underarm | 7 | 8 | 0 |
| 12" underarm | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| 7" skirt | 8 | 11 | 10 |
| STITCHING - straight | 7 | 11 | 8 |
| crooked | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| correct length | 8 | 3 | 9 |
| THREAD - too light | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| light on one dress | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| SHOULDER PADS - some snapped | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| some machine stitched | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| tacked | 8 | 11 | 9 |
| POCKETS | 7 | 6 | 4 |
| DECORATIONS | 0 | 3 | 5 |

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Quality of construction on the dresses in relation to price varied more between the companies than it did within the companies. The type of fabrics improved in quality until the \$14.95 dress was reached. Then the fabrics that were used seemed to be of equal quality in all ^{of} the dresses.

Since labeling is the only aid to the consumer in identifying certain qualities, it would seem that the dresses of the medium-high price range should give this information. However, there were fewer labels found on the dresses in the medium-high price range than in the other two price ranges.

There was an improvement shown in the type of belts used. Leather belts have greater durability than belts with leatherized backings which may not be drycleanable. Six leather belts were used in the medium-high price range against one in each of the other two price ranges.

The belt loops were the correct length in 31 per cent of the dresses in the low price range, and in 48 per cent of the dresses in the medium and medium-high price ranges. This shows a slight improvement in quality.

The kind of buttonholes seemed to indicate price as the dresses in the medium-high price range had bound buttonholes, eyelet buttonholes, and bias loops as well as some straight worked buttonholes. However, one-fourth of all the worked buttonholes in the medium-high price range were poorly worked.

In the low price range all companies except one put their sleeves in by the open sleeve method; in the medium price range four companies

used the open sleeve method, and seven companies used the closed sleeve method; the medium-high price range used only the closed sleeve method.

In the low price range, all companies except one used ten-inch zippers in their side placket openings. This company used twelve-inch zippers. In the medium price range, six companies used ten-inch zippers in their side placket opening and three companies used twelve-inch zippers in their side placket openings. In the medium-high price range all the side placket zippers were twelve inches long. In the low price range and in the medium price range there were only two zippers used on one dress, but in the medium-high price range there were four zippers used on some dresses. This would indicate that an increase in price was due not only to the cost of the zippers but the cost of having them put in.

The color of the thread improved with increased price range, but the improvement was very slight between the medium and the medium-high price range.

There were more long stitching and crooked stitching used in the dresses of the medium-high price range than in any other price range. This was probably due to the fact that all of the dresses in one company consistently used stitches too long and stitching that was crooked.

The largest side seams were found in the dresses of the low and medium price ranges. The dresses in the medium-high price range had a slightly lower per cent of dresses that met the minimum standard of one-half inch. Therefore, there was no improvement in construction in this price range.

The side seams in the low price range were pinked; in the medium price range they were pinked, or overcast; and in the medium-high price range they were either pinked, overcast, or had the edges of the seams stitched back. Since the last two methods of finishing seams prevent

raveling, there is a slight improvement of construction between each price range.

The width of the armseye seams in 65 per cent of the dresses in the low price range met the minimum standard of one-half inch, in 45 per cent of the medium price range, and of 21 per cent in the medium-high price range. There were two finishes overcasting and pinking used on the armseye seams of the dresses in the low and medium price ranges. The dresses in the medium-high price range used three armseye seam finishes, pinking, overcasting, and double stitching. The last two finishes prevent raveling and would be better on some materials than on others. The finish of the seam was discounted in part by the smallness of the armseye seams.

The poorest shoulder pads occurred in dresses which were priced \$25 and \$29.95 and were in dresses made by the same company.

No decorations were found in the dresses of the low price range but were found in dresses priced at \$19.95, \$22.95, and \$25 in dresses of the medium price range, and in all prices in the medium-high price range. This would indicate that price controlled the use of decorations.

Another indication of rise in construction standards with rise in price was shown in the method of putting in the hems. All of the dresses priced above \$14.95 had their hems put in with tape but only a few hems on the dresses below this price were taped.

To summarize, the dresses in the low price range were best in two ways, labels and width of the armseye seams. In the medium price range the stitching and the side seam widths were best. In the medium-high price range the belts, the color of the thread, the number and length of zippers, the type of buttonholes, the method of putting in sleeves, the side seam finish, and the finish of the armseye seam were superior to many of the dresses in the other price ranges. The dresses of the medium

and medium-high price ranges had material and decorations of equal quality. Dresses in the low, medium, and medium-high price ranges had belt fasteners, buttons, depth of hems, shoulder pads, and pockets of equal quality.

There were only four things that improved consistently with price: (1) the number of zippers, (2) the method of putting in sleeves, (3) taped hems, and (4) the side seam finishes. The only point that was exclusive with the medium-high dresses was the use of more than two zippers on the one-piece dresses.

There was a group of dresses in each price range that was far inferior to the other dresses in the same price range. These dresses were as poor in construction as the poorest dresses in the low price range.

In conclusion, this study tends to show that there is not enough difference in the quality of construction for the rise that was found in the price. It also shows that there is a great need for better labeling on all dresses but especially in the dresses of the medium and the medium-high price range.

At the present time, materials are limited in number and quality. The manufacturing and marketing of garments has not been normal since World War II. On the basis of the above statements, the author recommends that a study of this kind be made when the market is more stable. It is also recommended that consumer organizations unite in telling the manufacturer what kind of information women wish to find on their dress labels.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CHECK SHEET

| TRADE NAME MANUFACTURER | | | LOCAL STORE PRICE | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|--|--|
| FABRIC | firm | medium | sleazy | snaggs | | |
| LABELS | sanforset | yes no | tabelized | yes no | | |
| | colorfast | | | | | |
| | to washing | to cleaning | to perspiration | to light | | |
| | washable | yes no | dry-cleanable | yes no | | |
| | guarantee of--- | service | yes no | | | |
| | special care | yes no | | | | |
| CUT | | | | | | |
| SKIRT | grain true | yes no | sides even | yes no | | |
| WAIST | grain true | yes no | sides alike | yes no | | |
| PIECINGS | necessary | yes no | conspicuous | yes no | | |
| SLEEVES | true grain | yes no | puckered | yes no | | |
| | set | open sleeve | | closed sleeve | | |
| SEAMS | | | | | | |
| WAISTLINE | taped | bound | plain | width | | |
| ARMSEYE | width 1/2" | plain | bound | other finish | | |
| STAY | yes no | taped | double stitched | yes no | | |
| SIDES | 1/2" | narrow | wide | | | |
| SHOULDER | pinked | bound | stitched | other finish | | |
| | width 1/2" | | | | | |
| STITCHING | straight | crooked | no. per inch | good poor | | |
| THREAD | correct size | yes no | correct color | yes no | | |
| | correct finish | yes no | | | | |
| DETAILS | | | | | | |
| SHIRRING | even | yes no | reinforced | yes no | | |
| PLACKET | | | | | | |
| "Zipper" | smooth | yes no | sides even | yes no | | |
| buttons | smooth | yes no | sides even | yes no | | |
| snaps | smooth | yes no | sides even | yes no | | |
| hook-eyes | smooth | yes no | sides even | yes no | | |
| | alterable | yes no | stayed | yes no | | |
| FACINGS | straight | shaped | bias | | | |
| | smooth | puckered | | | | |
| BINDINGS | smooth | puckered | stitched well | yes no | | |
| BUTTONHOLES | bound | facing----- | split ends | square ends | | |
| BUTTONS | glass | pearl | plastic | covered | | |
| | washable | drycleanable | | | | |
| | decorative | plain | long shank | short shank | | |
| | sewed----- | loosely | firmly | too firmly | | |
| BELTS | lined | yes no | cleanable | yes no | | |
| eyelets | metal | worked | durable | yes no | | |
| buckle | metal | covered | plastic | pearl | | |
| BELT LOOPS | cloth | thread | fastened well--- | yes no | | |
| | too small | yes no | too large | yes no | | |
| SHOULDER PAD | easily removed | yes no | easily replaced | yes no | | |
| POCKETS | roomy | yes no | well located | yes no | | |
| | reinforced | yes no | double stitched | yes no | | |
| DECORATIONS | appropriate | durable | harmonious----- | color design | | |
| HEMS | finish | | width | | | |