

The History of E. Tautz

Edward Tautz founded E. Tautz in 1867 at 249 Oxford Street between Audley Street and Marble Arch in London's prosperous West End.

Tautz had been head cutter at the venerable sporting Tailors Hammond & Co before leaving to establish his own firm. At Hammond he had been tailor to England's finest sporting gentlemen, including Edward VII, as Prince of Wales and he took many of his noble clients with him to E. Tautz.

In 1875 the firm changed its name to E. Tautz & Sons as Edward brought his son Frederick George Tautz into the business. With the re-numbering of Oxford St shortly thereafter the address changed to 485 Oxford St. He very quickly established a thriving business causing The Times to write in 1878 that "'The Tautz's' make is as easily recognized by a connoisseur as the best brand of claret or the choicest Havanna'.

By 1883 Tautz had outgrown their original premises and had a new building erected to accommodate them. The new store was generously arranged over three floors, including a spacious cellar specially constructed to keep their leathers in proper condition.

By 1885 E. Tautz & Sons had opened a second store on the Rue de Faubourg St Honore in Paris, directly opposite the Elysee Palace. That year also saw the first use of the Tautz monogram of intertwined spurs and whip, a monogram that was used continuously until 1955.

Edward Tautz was an innovator in both cloth and cut, continuously releasing new products in new and innovative materials including waterproof tweeds and rainproof coverts. He fought hard to protect his business from counterfeiters, even going to the extent of using the courts. In 1886 he proved in court his invention of the original Knickerbocker Breeches that were to prove so popular and were the forerunner to today's plus 2's.

Tautz catered to Europe's sporting and military elite during the Grand Epoch and by 1897 had added the Royal Warrants of the King of Italy, The King and Queen of Spain, The Emperor of Austria and the Duc d'Aosta to his letterhead.

On February 16 1895, a young Winston Churchill placed his first order at Tautz, an order which included 1 pr blue medium Tautz Overall's, 1 pr dress pants with gold lace and one pr Venetian dress overalls with gold lace. Churchill was to be a regular client for the next twenty years. He was a great fan of the firm and indeed as a schoolboy at Harrow once wrote to his mother imploring her to send him amongst other things 'Breeches from Tautz'.

The firm made its name as a sporting and military tailor but in the 20th century expanded its civilian tailoring business and famously developed the Tautz Lapel, a double breasted lapel with a subtle rounded tip and lower almost horizontal gorge.

This distinctive cut was taken up by the stars of Hollywood in a big way and the likes of David Niven and Cary Grant both 'Sported the Tautz'.

Tautz rose to great prominence in America where it clothed many of the nation's most stylish gentlemen, including Anthony J Drexel Biddle, described by Esquire Magazine in 1960 as America's best dressed man. Amongst others on America's best dressed list three more were Tautz men; Ahmet Ertegun, Thomas Markoe Robertson, and Angier Duke.

In the 1950's the firm moved from Oxford Street and for a time shared premises with the venerable J Hoare & Co. first on Stafford St. and then on Conduit St. at the heart of Savile Row.

In 1968 E. Tautz & Sons was incorporated, along with J Hoare & Co. into the larger Savile Row firm of Norton & Sons.

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