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The Other Chanel(le): British twentieth century fashion retailing and Chanelle

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the interconnected story of two twentieth-century British fashion businesswomen - Rachel Hailey-Gardiner and Enid Chanelle- and the fashion retail business they ran, Chanelle. It primarily focuses on the expansion of the business under Enid's leadership between 1955-70, a time when there were few female executives in fashion. It questions how Enid harnessed her looks and fashion sense to promote Chanelle and overall demonstrates that a highly 'feminine' approach to business helped ensure the success of Chanelle.

KEYWORDS

Fashion retail; multiple shop; businesswoman; fashion buying; window display

Introduction

Historical accounts of women's labour in the sartorial trades often focus around design. The stories of female acumen at the management end of fashion businesses are less often remembered. This article explores the interconnected story of two twentieth-century British fashion businesswomen - Rachel Hailey-Gardiner (nee Hatwell and Andrews) (1889-1956) and Enid Chanelle (1919-2012)- and the fashion retail business they ran, Chanelle.[1] Neither of these women engaged in physical sartorial labour, however, both were significant fashion intermediaries. As will be illustrated, Enid operated in what was largely a man's world yet rose to prominence and was regularly profiled in the press.

This article begins by exploring the foundation of Chanelle in the 1920s and its expansion to three middle-class provincial towns: Cheltenham, Bournemouth, and Torquay.[2] The primary focus, however, is how under Enid's leadership, the chain rapidly expanded during the 1950s and 1960s. As will be illustrated, this success was not achieved alone, and Enid collaborated closely with Jewish fashion and theatre entrepreneur Louis Michaels (1902-1981) throughout her career. By 1955, Enid was one of the highest-paid women in fashion, yet her retail career started from humble beginnings as a corset salesgirl in a department store.[3] I trace her ascent up the career ladder from sales to management and examine her formula for success. While Enid was interviewed and featured in fashion publications, I focus on how she was presented in daily

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newspapers (both local and national). This was a conscious choice, as I wanted to understand how fashion careers were portrayed to people who were typically outside of the industry. This is not to say fashion magazines were ignored; I also studied women's fashion magazines to see how Chanelle shops were advertised to consumers and the types of garments stocked. Trade journals, particularly *Display,* provided useful context on the 'art' of window display during the period. It became clear from this research how significant Chanelle windows were, and multiple instances of the business winning awards for their window displays were traced.[4] This approach, concentrating on newspapers and magazines, was necessary because no known archival material related to the business survives. The House of Fraser archive contains material related to J.J. Allen, of which Chanelle became a part; however, there are no records pertaining specifically to Chanelle. Alongside this, several surviving Chanelle garments were studied. Examining these pieces offered a useful insight into the types of garments stocked by the business.

This article will demonstrate the key attributes that ensured Chanelle's prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. It considers how, utilising methods adopted from American retailing philosophy, the stock, décor, and staffing created a welcoming shopping environment. In interviews, Enid described her key skills as a 'flair for fashion' and an 'artistic vision.'[5] These are concepts more typically associated with design rather than management roles; however, creativity was vital to boosting the profits of the businesses Enid ran. It will then turn to consider the importance of Enid herself in promoting the business. Enid, likely Hailey-Gardiner before her, to a lesser extent, was a canny self-publicist who appeared regularly in newspaper and magazine articles. Both women engaged in the creation of a character. Hailey-Gardiner became 'Madame Chanelle,' whereas Enid became 'Miss Enid Chanelle.' Enid was the perfect poster girl for Chanelle, and this article argues that Enid's looks and fashion sense were cleverly harnessed to promote the shops. Furthermore, press articles largely portray Enid as an atypical female businesswoman, for whom femininity was central to her business approach. As will be indicated, this ensured she was more palatable for a general audience in local and national newspapers. Overall, this article demonstrates that a highly 'feminine' approach to business helped ensure the success of Chanelle.

Literature review

Between 1927 and 1970, Chanelle can be defined in various ways; however, from 1955-1970, Chanelle was a nationally significant fashion chain. This era is typically recognised as a period of independent fashion boutiques run by young, fashion-conscious women.[6] However, the British high street during this period was far more complex, populated with department stores, chains, and independent boutiques. Some prominent chain stores of the period have received academic attention, but generally speaking, the history of fashion chains is underrepresented in academic literature.[7] It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the changing retail landscape of the high street in mid-century Britain.[8] However, James B. Jefferys' 1954 work, *Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950,* greatly informed this research. While published 70 years ago, it offers crucial contextual information regarding the development and status of chains. As Jefferys illustrates, 'multiple shop' retailing began in the 1880s and 90s, but there was a rapid increase in the number of multiple shop organisations in the women's wear trade after 1925. These

organisations took advantage of changes in production (i.e. the increasing importance of 'fashion' in the ready-to-wear trade, alongside the introduction of new materials, primarily synthetics). Alongside this, these businesses set 'a very high standard of window dressing, lighting and clean, attractive shops.'[9]

The stories of women outside the independent dress shop and boutique sector are largely absent from twentieth-century British fashion retail history. Enid serves as a particularly interesting case study due to her career path; she started in fashion sales before becoming in turn a window dresser, buyer, director, and chairman of a fashion business. This means it is possible to consider a variety of disciplines that fall under the broader umbrella of fashion retail here. Grace Lees-Maffei writes, 'analysis of women's work not only increases our understanding of women's history, women's contributions to society and women's achievements but also increases understanding of professionalisation and the professions, labour history and design history more generally.'[10] Building on this approach, it is vitally important to provide the biographies of women like Enid, who were incredibly successful in fashion business, while questioning how they achieved their success. Enid was a rare woman in the field, described by journalist Shirley Conran as 'one of the most powerful and fashion-conscious buyers in Britain.'[11] Enid however broke with the prevailing conceptions of businesswomen during that period. She favoured a collaborative team approach to business and viewed her femininity as one of her greatest attributes. Enid is an accessible case study because she was extensively profiled by the press in the 1950s and 1960s.

Figures like window dressers, fashion buyers, directors, and chairmen have typically been absent from fashion history. As Regina Lee Blaszczyk and Veronique Pouillard suggest, these individuals generally existed in the 'shadows' of the fashion industry. In *European fashion: The creation of a global industry* they sought to shine a light on a broad range of figures from retail buyers to art directors, advertising agents to stylists. These varied careers, they argue, are vital to consider in order to fathom the process of value creation in the fashion industry.[12] Various terms have been used to describe these figures who performed mediating roles in the fashion industry, working between producers and consumers. Joanne Entwistle describes buyers, for example, as 'cultural mediators,'[13] whereas Blaszczyk uses the term 'fashion intermediaries.' She draws a dividing line between what she terms 'tastemakers,' who 'sought to reform consumer taste', and fashion intermediaries, who instead 'mediate the relationship between producers and consumers and help companies better understand demand.'[14] While Enid was a mediator between retailers and consumers, she fulfilled both the role of 'tastemaker' and 'intermediary.' In some instances, as will be illustrated, she actively sought to reform consumer taste through stock and window displays; in other cases, however, there was more of a negotiation at play, between manufacturers, retail staff, and consumers.

A small number of articles and book chapters have examined the history of window dressing or display art in Britain.[15] As Bethan Bide illustrates, British retail histories that address the field commonly focus on three periods – 'the development of display in early department stores, the innovations in retail spectacle during the interwar years, and the well-documented fashion revolutions that changed the look of shopping in the 1960s.'[16] There is good reason for these periods of focus- they were key experimental periods for display design, however it means that other eras are often left out of retail

history. Yasuko Suga has suggested that in the mid-1930s, some concrete steps towards establishing display design training were observed. These efforts included the opening of the London School of Modern Window Display in 1934, a summer course on display at the Lowestoft School of Art, and in 1937, the establishment of the Reimann School and Studios of Industrial and Commercial Art by a group of German-Jewish émigrés. This was the first school in Britain to focus on commercial art education with an independent display department. Skills taught at the Reimann included window dressing, figure draping, model making, exhibition work, display design, background work, aerograph work, and typography. One of the key staff at the Reimann was Natasha Kroll. She had studied display design when the school was based in Berlin and joined its teaching staff when the school relocated to London.[17] Kroll was a display artist of considerable merit and became display manager at Simpson (Piccadilly) in 1942, where she worked until 1954. That same year, her book Window Display was published as part of a series of professional studies by Studio Publications. Kroll's success in the field is particularly striking because she was a woman. As Kerry Meakin illustrates, most display professionals were male; however, there were some trailblazing women in the field during the 1920s and 30s. In her article, *Women in British Window Display during the 1920s and 1930s*, Meakin reconstructs the biographies of several influential female window practitioners, illustrating the efforts they undertook to become professionals and how their practice developed.[18]

The history of fashion buying in Britain has equally been afforded little academic research. Few sources, including biographies of buyers, exist. Most information regarding the field is found in textbooks, both historical and contemporary, primarily aimed at students. There are several reasons for this. In the 1950s and 60s, fashion buyers were largely viewed with contempt by manufacturers. As Madge Garland suggested, 'buyers have a reputation- not wholly without reason- for being terrors.'[19] The challenging position of the fashion buyer is also highlighted in a 1963 *Observer* article by Katharine Whitehorn. Fashion buyers typically began their careers in retail sales before transitioning to buying. While some stores offered training schemes for prospective buyers, there was a belief among some in the trade that it was a 'waste of money […] to train staff who will then leave for the altar, the factory bench or their rivals' counters.' This indicates the predominance of women in the field. The broader field of fashion retail- from sales through to roles like buying and merchandising- was a challenging industry to participate in during the 1950s and 60s. Whitehorn quotes Geoffrey Smith, the staff trainer at Bentall's department store, Kingston, who stated 'the retail trade doesn't deserve to have people working for it. When you had all the people you wanted, you offered long hours and lousy wages, and now they just won't come.' This article highlights a lack of prestige associated with fashion buying. It appears there was no central organisation or professional body representing buyers in 1963 (something that existed for display professionals).[20] Furthermore, there was little press coverage afforded to these people. Enid, with her extensive media attention as I will go onto discuss, was an anomaly.

One exception is Vannessa Denza, whose buying career spanned the 1950s to 2016. Denza is the focus of a recent article by Kevin Almond. He suggests that when Denza entered the industry, a career as a fashion buyer was 'an unheard of, undefined job […]. As there were no university degrees in fashion buying, training came through work experience.' He notes that Denza 'felt the real business of being a fashion buyer

and looking at fashion shows did not get going until the end of 1967.'[21] While this may have been Denza's personal experience, the career of fashion buyer was already well-defined in the 1950s and 1960s. Although it should be noted that it did not receive the same industry respect as other fashion careers.[22]

Founding Chanelle

Several press articles from the 1950s and 60s imply that Chanelle was established by Enid Chanelle.[23] However, this was not the case; the business was founded more than twenty years before Enid helped transform it into a nationally successful chain of shops. Therefore, it is important to start with the early history of the business. Chanelle was founded at 14 Temple Street, Birmingham *c.* 1927 as a 'gown and mantle' retail business. The earliest press mention found for the business is a staff vacancy advertisement seeking a gown-fitter in the *Birmingham Daily Post* on 17 May 1927.[24] The business was founded by Rachel Hatwell (née Andrews, later Hailey-Gardiner), who, according to the 1921 census, had previously worked as a 'mantle and gown' showroom saleswoman for Anna Goodrick, Birmingham.[25] In January 1929 Hatwell expanded her business, opening a new branch of Chanelle at 8 Promenade, Cheltenham. A *Gloucestershire Echo* article suggested that there were 'about' a dozen staff working in the business and that 'the main salon on the ground floor has a handsome new double front and the premises are spacious, with a large showroom on the floor above the salon.' Garment manufacturing was also carried out in workrooms on-site.[26] Early advertising for the Cheltenham branch described it as 'Chanelle Ltd, of London, Birmingham and Paris.' However, there is no evidence of branches in London and Paris.[27] There is some difficulty tracing the early history of Chanelle as there were several businesses operating under the same name in the 1920s and 30s. This included a ladies' outfitters in Shipley, Yorkshire, a ladies' outfitters in West Worthing, a costumier and milliner with branches in Buxton and Macclesfield and a ladies' fashion manufacturing business operating in Hatfield Street, London.[28] Chanelle occasionally had to announce they were not associated with any other businesses.[29]

Chanelle expanded further in the 1930s. In 1930 the Cheltenham branch moved to 60, Promenade- a significantly larger premises and in 1932 a new branch opened at 4 Westover Road, Bournemouth. Westover Road was described as 'the Bond Street' of Bournemouth and was Bournemouth's most important shopping street.[30] Finally, in October 1936 a further branch was opened at 7, The Strand, Torquay.[31] The Birmingham branch of the business closed *c.*1934, with emphasis placed on advertising the trio of stores; Cheltenham, Bournemouth and Torquay.[32]

Advertisements and editorials from the 1930s and 1940s illustrate the range of garments stocked by Chanelle- including everything from sportswear to evening gowns. Primarily Chanelle stocked ready-to-wear clothing, although alterations were carried out on-site and Chanelle produced a limited range of their own garments (Figure 1). Whilst the majority of Chanelle garments were made in England, they also sold some French models too, with advertisements indicating that Hatwell herself was selecting models for the shops in Paris.[33] These were sold alongside adaptations of Paris originals. In 1949 for example, Chanelle were selling adaptations of designs by Christian Dior, Robert Piquet, Pierre Balmain, Jean Desses and Jacques Fath.[34]

Figure 1. Black velvet opera coat, 1934-1936. This coat features the distinctive Chanelle logo with two stores included, Cheltenham and Bournemouth. Owing to when various stores opened and closed the garment can be dated between 1934 and 1936. Author's Collection.

In some advertisements, the proprietress was referred to as 'Madame Chanelle- the well-known English designer'- implying that she was the designer of the garments, but also potentially creating intentional confusion with the French designer, Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel.[35] By the time Hatwell established Chanelle, Chanel was a prominent figure in international fashion. The choice of name 'Chanelle' clearly demonstrates the Francophile biases existent in the fashion trade at the time, and that a French sounding name conferred status. Furthermore, it should be noted that Chanelle was referred to as a 'modiste' in the Birmingham street directories, rather than a 'costumier' or 'gown specialist', the two terms more often found in street directories for similar businesses. Using this French term implied that the business may be French, even though it was not.

In 1941, Hatwell married Leonard James Hailey-Gardiner in Bournemouth. After this, she generally used the name Mrs. Hailey-Gardiner. Whilst each branch had a manageress, as situations vacant advertisements indicate, Hailey-Gardiner maintained overall

control of the business until 1951.[36] That year advertisements indicated that the Torquay store was having a sale, because the business had been sold: 'from January 1st next Chanelle will continue under new management. The same high-class merchandise and the same staff will always be pleased to welcome you.'[37] Michaels seemingly took control of the business in 1952 as part of his growing fashion retail portfolio.[38]

It is beyond the scope of this article to fully consider Michaels' contribution to the fashion industry. However, it should be noted that he was a successful and astute businessman, who began building his retail empire in Bournemouth in the 1930s. The businesses he controlled included Margents (established at 4 Exeter Road, Bournemouth in 1937) and Maryon (established at 25 Westover Road, Bournemouth c.1937).[39] He also briefly owned The Barbecue, a dinner and dance venue opened on Westover Road in 1947. This was sold in 1948 to Fortes, a prominent Bournemouth based catering business.[40] In 1949 Michaels contemplated selling up his businesses and moving to Australia, however he quickly returned to Britain, and re-doubled his efforts, working to expand his business interests beyond Bournemouth.[41]

By 1954 the promotion of Chanelle had changed dramatically. Advertising had previously focused on local newspapers, but from 1954 onwards promotion went national and Chanelle advertisements appeared in key fashion publications including *Vogue, Harper's Bazaar* and *Tatler*. Developing the fashionable status of the chain, in November 1954 the first London branch of Chanelle opened at 23 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge (Figure 2).[42] There was also a significant change from Spring 1955 onwards, with a swathe of articles about the business in national and local newspapers, all of which mentioned the woman now in charge, Enid Chanelle.

Creating Miss Enid Chanelle

Enid Cooper was born in 1919, but her business persona, 'Miss Enid Chanelle,' was not created until 1955. Due to her use of a pseudonym and the fact that Enid typically reduced her age in interviews- suggesting, for example, in 1955 that Chanelle had 32 branches, 'one for each year of her life' (she was 36 at the time)- tracing her background has been challenging.[43] Her story, relayed here, is the result of cross-referencing over thirty newspaper articles in which her early life and career were discussed.

Enid Cooper was born in Yeovil, Somerset, in 1919. Her family moved to Poole, Dorset, while she was in school. Her first job, at age 16, was as a corset salesgirl at the Bournemouth department store Beales, earning 17s 6d a week.[44] Enid suggested that she was a 'flop', with little desire to work in sales. Her employer was set to fire her, but she pleaded for another chance, asking to dress one of the store's windows. She dressed it simply, with a high-backed chair in quilted satin, pink button seats, and satin bows. The design, she suggested, was 'outrageously feminine.' The window was a success, and thus began her career in window dressing.[45] It is unclear precisely when this incident took place, but the 1939 register lists her profession as a 'display artist' in a department store, suggesting that she was already working as a window dresser.[46] Enid drew inspiration for her first windows from broader contemporary design trends. Increasingly from the 1920s onwards display practitioners in Britain were adopting German principles in their window displays. These shifted away from crowded displays with large numbers of items to stripped back simple displays featuring a limited number

Figure 2. Advertisement for Chanelle's first London branch at 23 Brompton Road *Tatler*, 24 November 1954, 461 ©Mary Evans Picture Library.

of elements. According to Meakin, windows were increasingly designed so that it was 'purely the qualities of the product that attracted the consumer.'[47]

Reflecting on her career in 1959, Enid described her early experiences as a window dresser. She suggested:

> There were a whole lot of us boys and girls, working under an absolute slave driver a woman who really knew her job. Every minute when we weren't actually working on the windows, she had us preparing or cleaning things. I owe a tremendous amount to her, she taught me

> nearly everything I know about window dressing. She taught me to be so fussy that later when I was a window dresser to another shop my first thought was to get down on my hands and knees and scrub out the window because I didn't think the vacuum cleaner will clean it properly.[48]

There was a gender disparity evident in retail establishments in 1920s and 30s Britain. Sales staff were primarily female, whereas display professionals were predominantly middle-class, white, and male. This is reflected in the terminology used. Generally, women working in window display were referred to as window dressers, whereas men were described as display artists. As Lomax illustrates, 'those who saw themselves as 'artists' wanted display separated from the main selling function' and also, arguably, to distinguish themselves from the women working in the field.[49] By the time Enid entered the profession, many more women held prominent positions than had just ten years earlier, but it remained a predominantly masculine field that was difficult for women, particularly those from working-class backgrounds, to break into.[50] With this in mind, it is striking that Enid's first manager was female.

After several years as a display artist, Enid attempted a career change and trained to become a beautician in London. While doing this, she also took a £5-a-week window dresser job in Bournemouth with a fashion group to earn extra money. Despite her plans to enter the beauty world the fashion group manager asked if she could just do their windows at the weekends when she came to Bournemouth. She was subsequently offered £15 a week to stay and accepted. In interviews, Enid never indicated which fashion group she was working for; however, it seems likely that she was employed by Michaels' Maryon Margents fashion group.[51]

Enid set about reshaping window display in her new role. She wanted windows with no backs to them so shoppers could see through into the shop- however, there were valuable dark wooden panels at the back of the windows. Enid suggested that these should be removed, despite their value, but the company director disagreed. When the director went to America a few days later, she gave orders to paint the dark wood white and removed the backs that prevented customers from seeing into the store. Enid expected to be in trouble for this decision. However, returning from New York with a brand-new window-display scheme, the director was surprised to find he already had it in his store, thanks to Enid.[52] Enid's decision proved to be a successful gamble, and an increase in sales figures from the windows was recorded.[53] Tracing Enid's career trajectory is challenging because she often fabricated her age. However, this incident likely took place in 1946/1947. The 'director' mentioned in the accounts of this incident is most likely Michaels, who, as company director of Margents, travelled to New York in November 1946.[54]

Bide indicates that by 1945, display design in some British stores had become quite experimental- rarely displaying large numbers of fashion objects in one window, but commonly featuring one or two garments set in a narrative or surrealist scene, relying on symbolism to communicate with viewers.[55] These new display concepts largely originated in America, directly influenced by the extensive consumer research conducted there. The significance of this American influence is evident in the fact that many London stores sent their display managers on trips to the United States. For those without the finances to do this, international developments were also documented in the trade journal *Display,* which often included images of windows from New York's

key shopping streets. It is likely Enid drew inspiration from *Display*, and in later interviews, Enid readily admitted to being influenced by American ideas.[56] When Enid was interviewed in 1959, she indicated that this stripped-back narrative aesthetic was still her preference. It was suggested that she'd arrange a dress worth £4 as if it were a model worth £40 and usually only one outfit at a time in the window.[57] While the dress may have been reasonably priced, windows such as these sold an aspirational lifestyle for female consumers and hinted to the potential class-levelling effects of ready-to-wear clothing.

Enid broadly followed contemporary design trends in window dressing; however, she added her own unique touch, which helped distinguish her windows. This approach was playful, feminine, and ultimately desirable. She believed that 'women love pretty colours', which meant, for example, that in bleak November, she would dress a window in spring colours.[58] Throughout Enid's career, this distinctly feminine approach was key to the aesthetic she created, from windows to buying, and through to her role as a director and chairman.[59] As will be discussed later, she saw this as a real benefit. Indeed, I argue that one reason she had so many column inches written about her was her 'feminine' approach to business. Enid was unquestionably creative minded, but she also viewed windows as having a tangible financial benefit, insisting in 1961 that windows had to sell, and if they did not, she would change them twice in one day.[60] This was a sensible business decision, as a 1946 editorial in *Display* highlighted that 'at least 25 per cent of the people who enter a shop do so directly to the attraction of the window display.'[61]

In the late 1940s, Enid was promoted several times within the Maryon group, first becoming general manager and, *c.*1949, becoming a director of the business and chief buyer.[62] Enid felt this was an understandable career trajectory 'because a good window dresser knows about everything that's going on in the store exactly what stock there is and what the buyers are buying'.[63] However, it was certainly uncommon for a window dresser to ascend the career ladder as quickly as she did, and for a woman to become a director of a fashion business during this period.

Expanding Chanelle

By 1954 the Maryon fashion group (incorporating Chanelle) had 32[64] stores across London and the provinces.[65] Maryon shops primarily sold 'young idea' clothes, with garments largely produced by British popular price manufacturers, while Chanelle shops offered more expensive, exclusive clothing predominantly made by London wholesale couturiers.[66] During the 1950s the business grew rapidly, financed by Michaels but largely developed thanks to Enid's creative vision, evolving from a small provincial chain of dress shops into a major retail and manufacturing conglomerate of national significance.

In 1958 the Maryon group acquired a substantial interest in the department store J.J. Allen (Bournemouth) and in 1961 J.J. Allen Ltd became the parent company for Michaels' various retail interests.[67] As part of this acquisition, Enid became chairman of Chanelle.[68] Off the back of these acquisitions J.J. Allen recorded a significant growth in profits.[69] By 1963 J.J. Allen controlled a large number of important department stores across England. Their portfolio included Bright and Colson's (Exeter), Brights (Bristol), Wyatt & Sons (Oxford) Cavendish House (Cheltenham) and Morgan Squires

(Leicester).[70] Their interests expanded beyond retailing, and they also controlled manufacturing firms Benjamin Simon (a Leeds based men's and boy's clothing firm) and Ramar (ladies dresses).[71]

The business expanded in other directions too. In 1958, influenced by increasing custom from American tourists in Britain, a Chanelle store opened in New York. This was designed to be quintessentially British – its décor and windows mirrored those of the British stores, and British salesgirls were recruited. The store offered British fashion at various price points, replicating the stock available in Britain.[72] In addition, Chanelle expanded beyond clothing in the 1960s, opening several gift shops. Enid and her daughter Valerie selected the merchandise for these shops, drawing inspiration from international trends and ideas they picked up on their holidays. In 1966, for example, the stock (priced between 3 shillings sixpence and several hundred pounds) included elegant Swedish glass, leather spirit bottles from Spain, and crystal-plastic wastepaper baskets from the United States.[73]

The success of the J.J. Allen group, and particularly Chanelle, was built on a strong partnership between Enid and Michaels. Enid suggested that, 'he brought out the best in me by encouraging me to realise my goals.' The pair recognised each other's talents, with Michaels managing the finances and administration leaving Enid to pursue her artistic vision. From the outset of their business relationship, as Enid expressed, 'he trusted my flair and imagination and gave me the freedom to work the way I wanted […]He told me that it was vital in business life to have a dream, his dream being to create a fashion empire, which he entrusted me to build for him.'[74] Articles widely credited Enid for the group's success, and from 1955 onwards, she was generally the consumer-facing figurehead of the group.[75]

Building business success

Chanelle was a highly successful business venture in the 1950s and 1960s, with new stores and concessions or salons within department stores opening across Britain. While most retail establishments build their success on three key characteristics- stock, atmosphere, and staffing- I will demonstrate how Chanelle created its own niche within the crowded market of womenswear multiples. It should be noted that Chanelle created an environment more akin with independent stores, than other British chain stores. Examples of their chain store competitors include Richard Shops, Dorothy Perkins and Leon's/Noel's (H.A. Leon & Co.)

In the 1950s and 60s, Chanelle catered to a broad demographic of women. Enid suggested that the clothes stocked had 'no age ceiling' and that customers came from 'all income groups.'[76] However, it should be noted that, even for its time, Chanelle shops were not inclusive in terms of sizing, rarely offering garments above a size 16. Enid's clothing policy was, 'however little a woman can afford, she deserves the best that can be offered for the money, both in styling and fabric.' Practically, this meant certain features were incorporated into garments. In 1959, for example, she insisted that dresses be manufactured with six-inch hems (a hem in this period was typically around 1.5 in.) as she felt that, 'nothing gives a dress a luxurious, expensive look as much as a really deep hem.'[77] Surviving garments further illustrate the quality of Chanelle pieces. Figure 3 is a two-piece silk dress and jacket made by Frederick Starke and retailed

Figure 3. Frederick Starke two-piece silk dress and jacket, retailed by Chanelle. Late 1950s. Author's Collection.

at Chanelle. The dress features quality details such as hand finished buttonholes and large seam allowances throughout.

Because of this desire for luxury within ready-to-wear clothes, most garments stocked in Chanelle shops were wholesale couture, representing the top end of ready-to-wear production in Britain. Chanelle regularly appeared as a stockist for garments by leading British brands such as Horrockses, Rima, and Frank Usher in the pages of key British women's magazines. Between 1956–58 for example, Chanelle was Horrockses third largest multiple chain customer, purchasing 37,000 garments.[78] During the 1960s, the stock did change to some extent, and Enid eagerly supported young emerging designers. She was, for example, one of only a small handful of buyers who saw British designer Gina Fratini's first collection, and Chanelle stocked Fratini's garments from the inception of her business.[79]

Chanelle primarily sold garments selected from ready-to-wear manufacturers' collections, although the company did produce some of its own designs. Alongside this, Enid selected garments from the shows of top French and Italian couturiers and also purchased designs from the boutiques of emergent Parisian design talent to be copied in England.[80] To illustrate one example of the copies produced, in 1965, Chanelle was selling a 'reproduction' of a Pierre Cardin 'flame-red dress and gaiters' priced at 6 ½ guineas.[81]

Although Enid was not a designer, manufacturers made adjustments to designs at her request. On one occasion, she asked a manufacturer to create a range of dresses with

built-in petticoats. The manufacturer initially disagreed, suggesting that customers would have their own petticoat. However, Enid insisted that, as the dress was designed to be worn with a petticoat, it must leave the shop looking as it should, with petticoats in place.[82] This was a retail philosophy she returned to time and again. In 1957, she suggested, 'I believe that a woman should be able to wear a dress out of the shop as soon as she's bought it and not have to spend time and money 'dressing it up' with new buttons, belts, and scarves.'[83] Ultimately, this was about making the shopping experience as straightforward as possible for the customer. This was also instituted through window display, with full ensembles, purchasable in store shown. As Enid suggested, 'we try to present a picture rather than just garments, so that the customer can see the final effect.'[84] This demonstrates that Enid, and arguably also the window dressers and buyers employed at Chanelle, acted as 'tastemakers' for consumers. Rather than simply mediating between producers and consumers, offering total looks reflects an attempt to guide consumer taste to ensure that clothes were worn in a way she deemed 'correct'. Enid suggested that she 'relied exclusively on her own taste' and that 'I always feel sure there were enough women in England who would like the clothes I thought pretty.'[85] However, this was more than merely a 'gut feeling' for what customers wanted. Enid's extensive experience in fashion retail and her ongoing close contact with stores across the country meant she had a very clear understanding of what her customers wanted.

Chanelle had its origins in Birmingham; however, the first store closed during WWII. In 1955, as part of significant business expansion, Chanelle returned to Birmingham, and this store opening received extensive press coverage. This was, in part, because Enid chose to stock the same garments there as she did in London, contrary to what many retailers did at the time. She suggested: ′When I opened in Birmingham people said I couldn't expect to sell the same lines as in London. This is quite untrue. I don't care whether it's Birmingham, Wigan or anywhere else. Women still like pretty clothes and are prepared to buy them.′[86] The provinces were very important to Enid's retail philosophy and she believed all women across the country deserved access, in their hometowns, to the same clothing, in the same 'high fashion' setting. This meant that the aesthetic of Chanelle stores consistently followed the same model, creating a high-fashion atmosphere more typically associated with London.

Owing to Enid's background as a window dresser, windows were of paramount importance, and she maintained control over the window displays for Chanelle and the wider J.J. Allen group throughout her career.[87] Enid also managed the wider aesthetics of stores and concessions within the Chanelle group, creating a luxury atmosphere. For instance, when Coulson's in Exeter opened its Chanelle salon, it was 'decorated in deep red and gold. With a red carpet, gold wallpaper, and chandeliers.' In all stores, Enid also ensured that there were soft carpets and good lighting (Figures 4 and 5).[88] However, perhaps the most crucial factor in crafting this luxurious and welcoming environment was the staff.

Enid discussed her staffing and customer service policies in various interviews. She expected her staff to be helpful and polite but rejected hard-selling, believing that prospective customers should not 'be pestered or made to feel uncomfortable in any way. Instead, they must feel that they have the freedom of the store and personal service when they need it.' She also felt it was extremely important that customers were

Figure 4. Advertisement for the new Chanelle salon at Colson's, *Express & Echo*, 1 October 1963, 7. Courtesy of Reach PLC.

treated the same, whether or not they made a purchase.[89] This aligns with a model of customer service that Joy Cushman describes as a 'campaign for courtesy.' This was a retail approach from America that was more democratic and created a less forceful, more polite, and inviting shopping experience.[90]

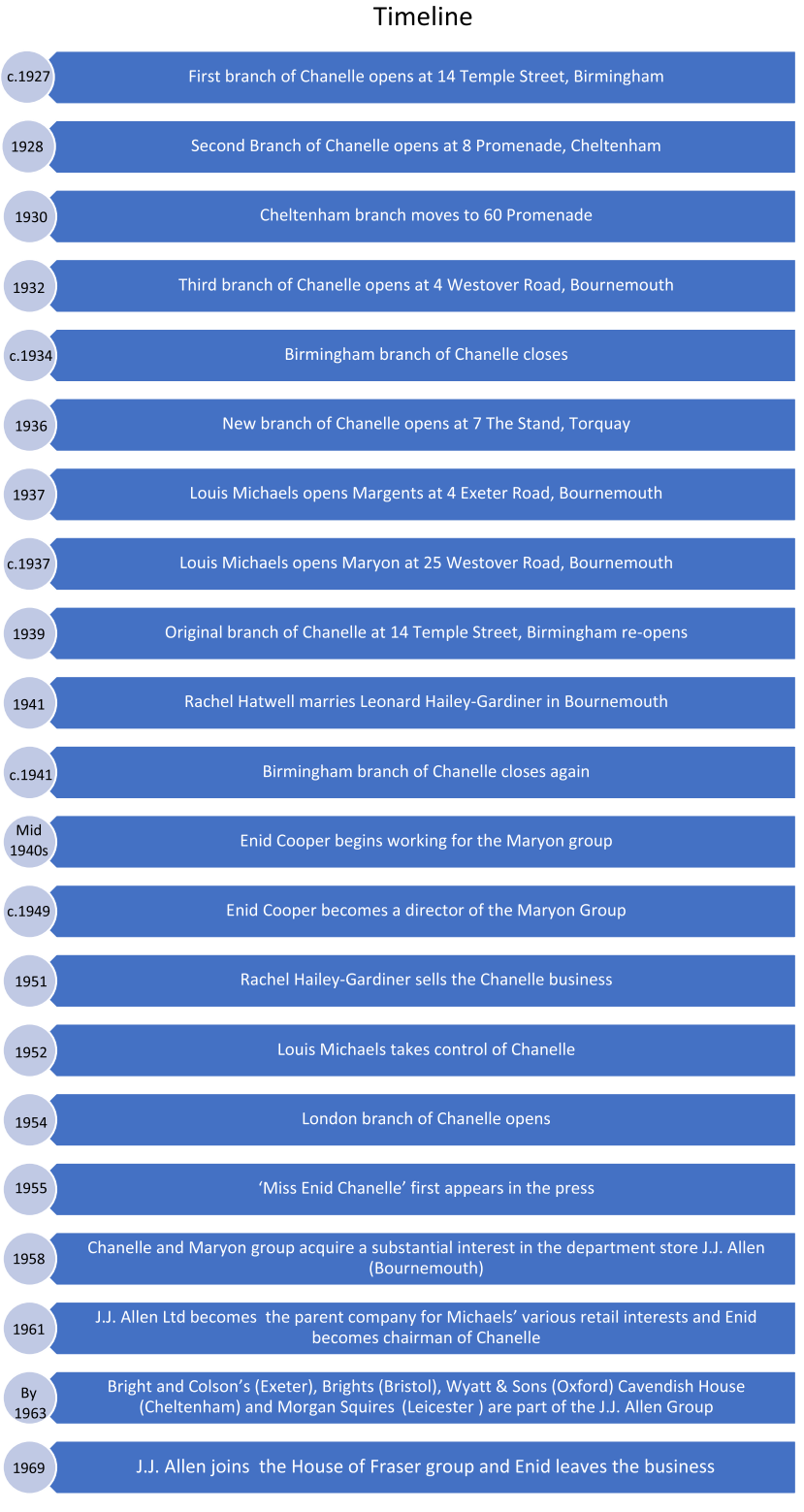

Figure 5. Timeline.

Enid maintained a hands-on approach to retailing, and in 1959, she suggested that about a third of her time was spent travelling around the country visiting the stores. During these visits, Enid spoke to everyone she could in the store, from sales assistants to window dressers and management. These visits played a fact-finding role. They helped Enid understand what stock sold well and what didn't and were also an opportunity for Enid to share the new ideas she had encountered both at home and abroad. These visits were also important for creating a team spirit- Enid suggested on multiple occasions that 'I don't want people to work for me […] I want people to work with me.[91] Enid inspired and motivated those around her, talking to all staff the same and giving credit to all those who contributed to success.[92] It is unclear what specific staff training was provided; however, employees were encouraged to cultivate a strong knowledge of fashion. Each season, store staff were expected to view four or five fashion collections to ensure they understood the latest trends and could accurately convey to customers how the styles were designed to be worn.[93] Enid also arranged for store staff to visit Paris occasionally to keep abreast of the latest fashions.[94] Fashion retail in this period was generally associated with low wages, high turnover of staff, lack of prestige and limited job satisfaction.[95] Things like the Paris trips can be seen as a perk designed to develop staff knowledge but also encourage staff satisfaction. Furthermore, the team spirit Enid created, rather than a top-down approach, meant that staff felt valued. This all acted to ensure staff retention. There was one other factor that ensured the success of Chanelle and, indeed, the wider Maryon and later J.J. Allen group: Enid herself. Ultimately, Enid and her self-promotion played a vital role in the business's success, as will now be illustrated.

A leading fashion personality

Enid was widely profiled in the press. This coverage helped establish her 'fashion capital' and, in turn, provided indirect promotion for Chanelle.[96] Enid's 'fashion capital' was cultivated in the following ways: her knowledge of fashion, appearance on advisory boards and panels,[97] press invitations to comment on the latest fashion trends from London, and her overall appearance, including choice of clothing. It was crucial for Enid to 'look the part,' as her appearance effectively embodied and mediated the identity of Chanelle.[98] In Enid's case, this was particularly complex because she changed her surname to Chanelle, making the woman and the brand interchangeable.

Between 1955 and 1970 numerous articles highlighted Enid's significance within the British fashion industry, demonstrating she was one of the highest-paid women in the fashion trade, wielding considerable power. Enid was variously described as Britain's biggest 'postwar fashion phenomenon, ' one of the most important 'tycoons' of the fashion industry, and also one of Britain's leading fashion personalities.[99] The use of the term 'personality' is particularly striking and akin to a contemporary celebrity.

Enid took part in some unusual publicity stunts that helped confirm her celebrity status. In 1966 she designed an apron for the *Observer* magazine's exhibition *Simple Girl's Guide to Kitchens* alongside other notable fashion figures including the designer Mary Quant and journalist Shirley Conran.[100] Enid also made regular guest appearances on television, featuring on the BBC 'Mainly for Women' programme in 1958 and on 'It Takes All Sortsrsquo; in 1965, where she discussed being a woman in the boardroom.[101] She also recognised extremely early the potential promotional benefits of commercial

television. In 1955, just months after ITV launched, she reserved a series of individual advertising spots of 30s each in the Palladium hour- one of the most popular shows on the channel.[102] Print media was also important for promoting her name and between 1960–1962 Enid appeared in a series of advertisements for the paper company Basildon Bond.[103]

Articles profiling Enid make clear that women in business were still a novelty in 1950s and 60s Britain. As a result, in many articles discussing influential figures in British business, Enid was the only woman mentioned. For instance, in 1957, she was the sole woman featured in a *Daily Mirror* article exploring how millionaires made their money.[104] Additionally, in a *Glasgow Sunday Mail* article, she was the only woman included in a piece discussing millionaires' holiday destinations.[105] It can be argued that Enid was included in these articles, over other significant women in business, owing to her appearance. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, as various articles illustrate, the typical conception of businesswomen was 'hard-boiled harridans who put finance before femininity'.[106] However, Enid broke this mould- she was tall and slender with a 'model girl' figure, blonde hair, and blue eyes.[107] Enid viewed her appearance as a promotional tool and believed her looks contributed to her success. In several interviews, she extolled the importance of good 'grooming' for business success.[108] In 1962, she even suggested that fashion and beauty should be included in the school curriculum. 'It's a tragedy that clothes sense isn't taught in schools […] after all, it's much more vital than maths or history.'[109]

Enid's personal style blended high fashion with occasional avant-garde notes- precisely the kind of stock Chanelle offered. She generally avoided what she termed 'frilly' clothes, favouring a 'casual chic' aesthetic, suggesting she was happiest when wearing slacks. At home, Enid preferred jersey trousers in bold, bright colours paired with either a chunky sweater or a tailored shirt. Her colour choices were often striking; a favourite ensemble included a white shirt paired with emerald slacks and powder blue fluffy mules, accented by a coral silk cummerbund around her waist. Her accessories were thoughtfully selected- the few she added to her outfits were 'bold and important.' She incorporated jewellery 'sparingly' and preferred to transform the look of a dress by adding colourful belts. Never afraid to be unconventional, she frequently wore Bermuda shorts and was spotted at one fashion show in 1957 sporting knee-length red flannel breeches.[110]

While Enid was undeniably at the cutting edge of fashion, her hobbies and interests leaned towards the traditional and were also discussed in the press. She was an enthusiastic gardener, enjoyed swimming 'all year round to keep her figure trim,' and loved to cook.[111] She remarked, 'I'm not a fancy cook. I turn out Yorkshire pudding, huge roasts, and all that olde English stuff. I'm not good on sauces, but I'm terribly good on stodge: puddings and pies, homemade cakes, and bread.'[112] Her home life was also discussed in profiles, and various mention her daughter Valerie- suggesting Enid listened to pop music in her room and often borrowed her clothes.[113] The articles discussing Enid's interests and her life outside the boardroom overall present her as a relatable modern working woman. This portrayal helped promote the clothes sold at Chanelle as suited to the average working middle-class woman. Although articles suggest that Chanelle did not have a 'typical' customer, an examination of the business's advertisements and associated editorials indicates that middle-class women in their thirties and forties

were primarily their target. As the 1960s progressed, these consumers began to wield less power in the British fashion industry, prompting Chanelle to adapt by selling more designs by younger emerging designers. Enid's mention of borrowing her daughter's clothing illustrated her understanding of contemporary youth fashion.

Enid was a woman in a man's world, when most fashion directors were still men. She believed that being a woman was her 'principle asset' because it allowed her to truly understand the female customers her stores catered to. However, her femininity also contributed to the extensive press coverage she received. Enid was viewed as a novelty, and arguably, her success partly hinged on her good looks; at one point, she was described as resembling 'Hollywood's somewhat romantic idea of the top woman business executive.'[114] This is not to discredit her remarkable achievements; she played a vital role in ensuring Chanelle's success, but ultimately, her appearance made her more palatable to the general public in daily newspapers.

Postscript

In 1969, J.J. Allen joined the House of Fraser group for £ 5.3 million.[115] Enid left the business at that time, with articles in the summer of 1970 suggesting that she was 'on the brink of a new career. '[116] The sale of J.J. Allen did not mark the end of Michaels and Enid's partnership. In the early 1970s, the pair embarked on an ambitious theatre venture, with Michaels as chairman and Enid as manager of the new Louis I Michaels Theatre Group. After Michaels' death, Enid became president of the group.[117] Profits from the J.J. Allen sale were invested in buying, renovating, and redeveloping theatres across the south of England. By 1977, theatres owned and controlled by the group included the Theatre Royal Brighton, the Theatre Royal Bath, the Richmond Theatre, the Playhouse Bournemouth and the Devonshire park, Eastbourne and, perhaps most significantly, the Haymarket in London.[118] The partnership of Michaels and Enid was just as successful in theatre as it had been in fashion retail.

Conclusion

Enid was neither a designer nor a maker; however, through her various roles in the fashion industry, she became an important figure in the symbolic 'making' of fashion, serving as a key intermediary between producers and consumers. The period 1955–1970 is typically associated with the rise of young female designers, many of whom established both retail and manufacturing businesses. While these women played a vital role in the British fashion landscape, it is crucial to acknowledge other figures like Enid, who also shaped fashion consumption in Britain. Indeed, as has been illustrated, Enid ensured that some of these emerging young designers were stocked in her stores.

This article has shown that Enid's retailing methods were partially inspired by American practices. However, what distinguished her approach was that it was overtly feminine, relying on her own taste. Here, fashion retailing outside of London has been considered. While London undeniably shaped British fashion culture, shops like Chanelle offered the same clothes in the provinces as in London.

Enid deserves the attention given here because she was a rare woman who achieved remarkable success at the management end of fashion business. Furthermore, very few

other figures in fashion retailing were such excellent self-publicists as she was. While it may seem superficial to consider, Enid's appearance played a role in her success. Articles consistently suggest that Enid was a fantastic boss, portraying her as kind, down-to-earth, modest, and hardworking. While Chanelle sold high fashion, this persona helped to promote the approachability of the business. It suggested that everyone was welcome at Chanelle shops, regardless of how much they had to spend. Furthermore, the persona presented in newspaper articles was palatable, even to those with more traditional views who believed a woman's place was not in the boardroom.

While Enid was the focus of this article, it was imperative to also illustrate the significance of Rachel Hailey-Gardiner, who founded Chanelle, as the business retained many of its characteristics (i.e. the same kind of stock and décor) under Enid's leadership. Enid did not create Chanelle's success alone. Throughout her career, she consistently emphasised the importance of teamwork, encouraging her staff to work 'with' rather than 'for' her. This highlights the importance of collaboration in fashion retail to ensure truly successful businesses. Her most significant collaborator was Michaels, who provided the finances but remained largely in the shadows. In contrast, Enid was the poster girl for the business, and her creative flair ensured its fashion credentials.

Notes

1. I will refer to Enid by her first name only, so as not to cause confusion with the shop.
2. The term provincial is used here as a period-correct term with no negative association.
3. Eileen Ashcroft, 'How to be happy (not to mention successful) at work', *Londonderry Sentinel*, October 1, 1955, 7.
4. See for example: 'Reflections', *Display*, April 1963, 58; 'Reflections', *Display*, April 1968, 8.
5. Jenny Martin, 'Fashion does not end in Bond Street', *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, April 21, 1955, 6**;** Sarah Brown, *Moving on Up: Inspirational Advice to Change Lives* (London: Ebury, 2003), 23.
6. See: Sonia Ashmore, 'I think they're all mad' shopping in swinging London', in *Swinging Sixties,* ed. Christopher Breward, David Gilbert and Jenny Lister (London: V&A, 2006), 58-79; Bethan Bide, 'Be My Baby: Sensory Difference and Youth Identity in British Fashion Retail, 1945–1970', in *Shopping and the Senses, 1800-1970: A Sensory History of Retail and Consumption*, ed. Serena Dyer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022); Marnie Fogg, *Boutique : a '60s cultural phenomenon* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2003); Barbara Hulanicki and Martin Pel, *The Biba Years: 1963–1975* (London: V&A, 2014); Richard Lester, *Boutique London: a history: King's Road to Carnaby Street (*Woodbridge: ACC, 2010); Jenny Lister, *Mary Quant* (London: V&A, 2019).
7. See: Rachel Worth, *Fashion for the people: a history of clothing at Marks & Spence*r (Oxford: Berg, 2006)

2006. ; Mark Spoerer, *C & A: a family business in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom,1911-1961* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2016).

Forthcoming, Kathryn A Morrison, *Chain Stores in the Golden Age of the British High Street* (2025)

8. See: Rachel Bowlby *Back to the Shops: The High Street in History and the Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).
9. James B Jefferys, *Retail trading in Britain 1850–1950* (Cambridge: University Press, 1954), 239-241.
10. Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction: Professionalization as a Focus in Interior Design History', *Journal of Design History* 21, no.1 (2008): 10.

11. Shirley Conran, 'HERS: This side of the Chanelle', *Observer*, August 27, 1967, 19.
12. Regina Lee Blaszczyk and Veronique Pouillard, *European fashion: The creation of a global industry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 18.
13. Joanne Entwistle, 'The Cultural Economy of Fashion Buying' *Current Sociology*, 54, no.5 (2006): 704-724.
14. Blaszczyk, *Producing Fashion: commerce, culture, and consumers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 6.
15. Kerry Meakin, *The Professionalization of Window Display in Britain, 1919–1939* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).

    Meakin cites the following key histories of British window display;

    Susan Lomax, 'The View from the Shop: Window Display, the Shopper and the Formulation of Theory', in *Cultures of Selling: Perspectives on Consumption and Society since 1700*, John Benson & Laura Ugolini (eds), (Aldershot & Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 265–92; Yasuko Suga, *'Modernism, Commercialism and Display Design in Britain: The Reimann School and Studios of Industrial and Commercial Art', Journal of Design History*, 19, no.2, (2006): 137–154.
16. Bethan Bide, 'More than Window Dressing: Visual Merchandising and Austerity in London's West End, 1945–50', *Business History,* 60, no.7, (2017): 984.
17. Suga, 'Modernism, Commercialism and Display Design', 143.
18. Meakin, 'Women in British Window Display during the 1920s and 1930s', *History of Retailing and Consumption,* vol.7, no.2 (2021): 132.
19. Madge Garland, *Fashion* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), 97.
20. Katharine Whitehorn, 'To buy or not to buy Whitehorn', *The Observer,* October 6, 1963, 33.
21. Kevin Almond, 'The Fashion Buying Career of Vanessa Denza: A Case Study Analysis to Inform Future Buying Skills', *Fashion Practice,* 15, no.2 (2022): 326–48.
22. See: Garland, *Fashion*, 97; Janey Ironside, *Fashion as a career* (London: Museum Press, 1963), 90.

    See also: **'**Nottm. Fashion buyer to retire', *Nottingham Evening Post***,** 25 April 1950, 5. This article discussed the 36-year buying career of A.M. Milner a model gown buyer for the department store Griffin and Spalding.
23. See: 'One woman's taste: And it sells a million', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 14, 1957, 72.
24. *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 17, 1927, 3.

    Chanelle first appeared in the *Kelly's Birmingham Street Directory* in 1927. *Kelly's Directory of Birmingham,* 1927, 386.
25. Household of William Henry Goodman, 1921 census. The National Archives; Kew, London, England.
26. 'Fire in the Promenade', *Gloucestershire Echo*, April 28, 1928, 5.
27. *Gloucestershire Echo*, December 21, 1927, 3.
28. *Bradford Observer*, March 30, 1938, 2; *Worthing Herald,* March 7, 1936, 22; *The Macclesfield Times and East Cheshire Observer*, January 15, 1932, 2; 'Warehouse Twice Broken Into', *The Times*, December 22, 1925, 14.
29. *Torbay Express and South Devon Echo*, April 22, 1941, 3.
30. 'The Whirligig of Fashion', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* December 17, 1932, 7; *Swanage Times & Directory*, January 9, 1931, 6.
31. *Torbay Express and South Devon Echo*, October 19, 1936, 6.
32. Chanelle appears in 1934 Birmingham Street directory and then is missing between 1935-1939. See: *Kelly's Directory of Birmingham, 1934*, 437*; Kelly's Directory of Birmingham, 1935*, 441. The business was replaced by 'Ray Durley Ltd, Costumiers'. It then re-opened in December 1939 at 14 Temple Street. See: *Birmingham Mail*, December 9, 1939, 1. The business appears in both the 1940 and 1941 street directory but had closed by 1942. See: *Kelly's Directory of Birmingham,* 1941, 501.
33. 'Parisian Models', *Torbay Express and South Devon Echo*, October 23, 1937, 4.
34. *Torbay Express and South Devon Echo*, October 12, 1949, 6.

35. *Torbay Express and South Devon Echo*, October 19, 1936, 6.
36. See: *Gloucestershire Echo,* November 26, 1943, 2; *Western Morning News*, April 21, 1950, 6.
37. *Torquay Times and South Devon Advertiser*, November 23, 1951, 5.
38. In January 1953 the company was on a list of 'recent company registrations', *Fur Record*, January 1953, 8.
39. See: *Mate's Bournemouth Business Directory,* 1937, 347; 'Store's First Anniversary', *Bournemouth Times*, December 16, 1938, 16.
40. 'Barbecue will be new to Westover road', *Bournemouth Times*, May 2, 1947, 1.
    'Fortes take over the barbecue', *Bournemouth Times*, February 6, 1948, 1.
41. 'Many more fashion shops', *Bournemouth Times*, May 26, 1950, 1.
42. *Evening Standard*, November 12, 1954, 2.
43. 'Take a risk' *Daily Mail,* November 25, 1955, 5.
44. Andrew Allan, 'Miss Chanelle's fancy', *Daily Mail*, May 29, 1962, 1.
45. 'A question of taking opportunities', *Middlesex County Times*, October 11, 1958, 6.
46. *1939 Register*; Reference: *RG 101/6924J.* The National Archives; Kew, London, England.
47. Meakin, 'The Bauhaus and the Business of Window Display: Moholy-Nagy's Endeavours at Window Display in London', *Journal of Design History*, Volume 35, no. 3, (2022): 265.
48. Monica Furlong, 'The Tatler interviews Enid Chanelle', *The Tatler*, September 9, 1959, 30.
49. Lomax, 'The View from the Shop', 288.
50. Meakin, 'Women in British Window Display', 132.
51. Iris Ashley, 'Luck? I just don't believe it', *Daily Mail,* December 12, 1955, 5.
52. Ibid.
53. 'The way to the top in the big stores', *Daily Herald,* May 7, 1957, 5.
54. The passenger manifest suggests Michaels intended to remain in the United States for 60 days- so he may have returned in early 1947. It has not been possible to trace his return to the UK.
    Louis Michaels; Arrival date 30 November 1946. *New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1957*. Ancestry.com
55. Bide, 'More than Window Dressing'.
56. Conran, 'Good at Stodge', *The Observer Magazine*, September 17, 1966, 37-38.
57. Ashley, 'Luck?', 5.
58. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
59. 'A question of taking opportunities', 6.
60. 'Women in business', *Evening Standard,* Aug 30, 1961, 3.
61. *Display*, February 1946, 10. Cited in Bide, 'More than Window Dressing', 989.
62. Conran, 'Good at Stodge', 37-38.
63. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
64. It has not been possible to trace the location of all of the stores which were part of the group. Advertisements indicate there were certainly Chanelle branches in Bournemouth, Cheltenham, Oxford, Southampton, Torquay, Winchester and London in 1954.
65. Sale of Marble Arch Pavilion', *Daily Mail*, September 21, 1954, 5.
66. 'In 8 years two young women created a chain of dress stores around the country', *Lincolnshire Echo*, August 3, 1955, 4.
67. 'City news in brief', *The Times*, December 17, 1958, 12.
68. 'Bids and Deals', *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 7, 1961, 20.
69. 'Five-fold leap in fashion store profits', *Daily Mail*, May 3, 1961, 2; 'J.J. Allen's record profits', *The Times*, June 22, 1962, 20.
70. 'Colson's advise merger' *Express and Echo*, January 19, 1960, 5; 'Allen's £1m bid for Cavendish House', *Wolverhampton Express and Star*, November 2, 1962, 27; 'Large city store may be rebuilt', *Leicester Evening Mail*, December 13, 1962, 1.
71. '.J.J Allen's record profits', 20.
72. 'Madison Ave. Site Sought by English Specialty Chain', *Women's Wear Daily*, Feb 12, 1958, 10.
73. 'Knowing what women will buy', *Birmingham Daily Post,* September 13, 1966, 36.

74. Brown, *Moving on U*p, 23.
75. See: 'Five-fold leap', 2; Michael Pearson, 'The millionaire mentality', *Weekly Dispatch*, November 29, 1959, 4-5; Ashley, 'Luck?', 5.

    Two articles credit the groups's success to both Enid and her co-director Diana Allen. (See: Edith Teague, 'What to-day's big moneyspenders buy', *Liverpool Echo*, November 13, 1959, 17; 'In 8 years two young women', 4) It has proved challenging to find information about Allen, however in 1955 she was also a director of Maryon.
76. 'From corsets to high fashion' *Reading Evening Post*, December 7, 1966, 4; Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
77. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
78. Christine Boydell, *Horrockses Fashions: Off-the-peg Style in the '40s and '50s* (London: V&A, 2010), 148.
79. Teague, 'Ready-to-wear fashions chosen by Princess Anne', *The Leader-Post*, October 1, 1971, 9.
80. Serena Sinclair, 'Can Paris stay at the top?' *The Daily Telegraph*, December 17, 1964, 11.
81. 'Britannia rules the washables', *Belfast Telegraph*, December 15, 1965, 11.
82. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
83. 'One woman's taste', 72.
84. 'Why is Fashion so Confusing ?' *Good Housekeeping*, September 1, 1959, 53-57, 170-173.
85. 'One woman's taste', 72; 'Why is Fashion so Confusing?', 170-173.
86. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
87. 'Women in business', 3.
88. 'Paris gowns and 2000 roses', *Express and Echo*, October 2, 1963, 3.
89. Kaye Almey, 'Shod with scarlet two-in-ones', *Leicester Daily Mercury*, January 4, 1963, 16; Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
90. Joy Cushman, 'The Customer is Always Right' : Change and Continuity in British and American Department Store Salesmanship, 1945–1960' in Cultures of Selling, 195-6.
91. Daphne Hubbard, 'The tycoon with such a warm smile', *Bristol Evening Post*, September 4, 1962, 6.
92. Brown, *Moving on Up*, 23; Almey, 'Shod with scarlet', 16.
93. **'**Why is Fashion so Confusing?'**,** 170-173.
94. Furlong, 'The Tatler Interviews', 30.
95. Cushman, 'The Customer is Always Right'.
96. Here I borrow from Agnes Rocamora and Entwistle's concept of fashion capital. 'The Field of Fashion Materialized: A Study of London Fashion Week', *Sociology*, 40, vol.4 (2006).
97. See: 'A design award for cotton fabrics', *Kensington News and West London Times*, September 11, 1959, 9; 'Why is Fashion so Confusing?', 170-173**.**
98. See: Entwistle, 'The Cultural Economy of Fashion Buying'.
99. 'In 8 years two young women', 4; Winifred Carr, 'Can career girls get to the top out of town?' *The Daily Telegraph*, December 29, 1956, 5; 'One woman's taste', 72; Arthur Helliwell, 'Well stripe me purple', *The People*, March 4, 1962, 12; Vivien Hislop, 'Clothes and me- by the shapeliest tycoon', *Manchester Evening News*, June 22, 1962, 9; Theo Goldrey, 'Exploded: the myth that is takes money', *Daily Mail,* August 1, 1961, 8; Conran, 'Good at Stodge', 37-38; Martin, 'Fashion does not end in Bond Street', 6; 'New rose wins all the way', *Manchester Evening News*, August 27, 1958, 12.
100. Conran, 'New aprons to boost the morale,' *Observer Magazine*, May 15, 1966, 32-33.
101. *Mainly for Women*, BBC television. 26 March 1958; *It Takes All Sorts*, BBC television. 9 November 1965.
102. 'Take a risk', 5.
103. See: *Daily Mirror*, May 19, 1960, 10.
104. Keither Waterhouse, 'Millionaires tell you how', *Daily Mirror*, October 7, 1957, 11.
105. Duncan Lamont, 'Where do millionaires go for the holidays?' *Sunday Mail (Glasgow*), June 22, 1958, 11.
106. 'From corsets to high fashion', 4.

107. Hislop, 'Clothes and me', 9; Ashcroft, 'How to be happy', 7.
108. Ashcroft, 'How to be happy', 7.
109. Helliwell, 'Well stripe me purple', 12.
110. Hislop, 'Clothes and me', 9; 'She likes to relax in slacks', *Daily Herald*, March 19, 1957, 6.
111. Ashley, 'Luck?', 5.
112. Conran, 'Good at Stodge', 37-38.
113. 'The teen room', *Daily Express,* January 4, 1960, 6; Teague, 'What to-day's big moneyspenders buy', 17.
114. 'Take a risk', 5.
115. J.J. Allen Ltd, House of Fraser Archive, https://housefraserarchive.ac.uk/company/?id=c1575 (accessed 14 November 2024).
116. 'New Job', *Daily Mail*, July 3, 1970,4.
117. Brown, *Moving on Up,* 23.
118. Gerry Winburn, 'Duncan Weldon: A whiz-kid image solidly earned', *The Stage*, July 14, 1977, 8.

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