

FUR for GLAMOUR

By Isabella Taves

The Autumn Fashion Picture Is Glamorous and Your Furs Oblige

NEW YORK

THIS is fur-bearing time around New York. Not that it's cold. The tomato plants up in Radio City Gardens are still giving, the bees are still brooding, and the sun is warm on the Plaza steps. But it's fall, according to the date-line, and everybody is thinking about furs, even those of us who can't possibly afford to have the old cat relined.

There are two bits of important news in furs this year around these parts. First of all, the days when a fur coat was something to keep you warm are gone. Gone completely. The fur coat that the smart young women around New York are choosing is a definite part of an ensemble. It has a fashion theme song. For instance, take Elizabeth Wragge. Elizabeth's the ingenue in NBC's Pepper Young's Family and off the air she is still the perfect debutante type. She loves new gadgets and charm bracelets and "cute" clothes.

And she has, for her fur coat ensemble, one of the jacket combinations. The new short muskrat coat hits her just at midriff. It has square shoulders, a sweet little round collar, and big bishop sleeves. With it, right in the same ensemble, is a bright blue tweed skirt and a matching Ascot.

"It's the most divinely practical thing imaginable," Elizabeth assured me, "because I can wear the skirt and Ascot with my tweed jacket in the country. I can wear my fur jacket with other wool dresses and even with my evening clothes, for a change. And the whole outfit has spirit and a 1938 look."

Elizabeth has a really wonderful silver fox cape which she usually wears for her gala evenings, or over her brief, plaited afternoon dresses for afternoon appearances in public. "Of course I adore the silver fox," she said, "for it makes me feel like a glamour girl. But I never feel quite as much myself in it as I do when I wear something cute and sporty. You can see how that is."

AS A matter of fact, I can. Because different people are suited to different kinds of furs, just as they are to clothes. There's Hildegard, for instance. This lovely NBC singer is, as you know of old, the original sophisticated lady. She has a silver fox cape, too. But her cape is long—almost to the bottom of her daytime hems—and she wears it by day and by night. Here's Hildegard's pet theory on furs: "I like my fabrics fine and I want my furs good. I don't care what kind of fur it is, but I want the best of its type. I would rather have a well-tailored woolen coat with one good seal pocket than a whole coat of shoddy skins."

Incidentally, when I saw Hildegard the other day coming out of the NBC television studio she was wearing her silver fox cape and a tiny hat and a veil and looking heavenly, although it was around 11 o'clock in the morning and—well, quite warm. I took her around to the NBC drug store and lured her into a double orange juice and she told me about the new suit she was designing.

It is of bottle green wool, that color which is going to be very smart this fall. The skirt is very tightly fitted and a little longer than most radio gals wear theirs—12 inches from the floor. With it she is having a slimly-fitted

jacket, very tight through the waist to give herself that nice corseted look Paris is talking about. And—here's the news—she is plastering on the front of the jacket a vest of nutria and having a shaker hat of nutria to match. (A shaker hat, in case I'm speaking Greek, is a tall business that looks like a dunce cap crossed with a salt box.)

WHICH brings me to the second bit of important news in the fur picture. The New York big fashion shots who have been to the Paris Openings are back now screaming happily about how much lush and glamour and richness was everywhere at the openings. This trend is very evident in furs. You saw it, just a moment ago, in Hildegard's silver fox cape at 11 in the morning. You'll see it more and more as the season progresses. And, because here is the natural place for it, you will see it for the most part in marvelous fur coats.

Helen Hayes has one—I glimpsed it the other day, but hanging in the closet and not on the back. It is a beautiful full-length mink with some of the most gorgeous skins I've ever seen in it. Yet it is tailored and fitted as meticulously as a wool coat. Gladys Swarthout has a full-length silver fox which she wears—bless her lucky heart—only for evenings and concerts.

And Irene Rich is sporting a new sable-dyed martin cape, but a brief cape that hardly strikes her hip bones. Irene is known as radio's best dressed woman—well, I'm not one to quibble about that. She has the most sensible ideas of almost anybody I know and she always looks like the front cover of a fashion magazine. Irene chose this cape because it would wear so well and be so practical. I saw her the other night with it thrown over an ivory satin evening gown and she looked really beautiful. Yet she tells me that the cape is just as smart with her suits.

You see, Irene is not what you would call a horse-and-tweed woman. When she goes to the country she wears those lovely soft English tweeds in muted colors and looks like a British country-woman. But when she is in the city, she looks typical Paris-New York. She wears slimly tailored suits with frilly white handmade blouses and dashing, very sophisticated hats.

Irene believes that if you are trying to work out a clothes budget, it is smart to choose a really nice, rather formal fur coat and wear it for both evening and daytime. "We radio people are freaks," she said, "because we do require so many evening clothes. But most people only wear an evening wrap a few times a year. Isn't it much smarter to put the money you would spend for that into your daytime jacket or cape? I think so."

JANE FROMAN is also an exponent of the fur-coat-for-evening fashion. She has a darling little white fox jacket in that new four-inches-below-the-hip length. It is big and bulky and lush in the new manner, which makes Jane look extra fragile down beneath it. Jane wore this coat all summer when she was on the Benny program, wandering smugly around NBC's air-cooled studios while you and I were sitting in nightgowns around our radios. My pet spies who were on the spot tell me that, in her favorite black marquisette dress, she looked like a chocolate milk shake.

Jane insists that she will wear her

A sable-dyed martin capelet (left) is worn by Irene Rich, who has been called radio's best dressed woman. Ten full and very special silver fox skins have been made into this lovely cape (right) for Hildegard, the NBC television singer.



Sketched by Louise

white fox for country week-ends this winter with bright sweaters and caps and for evening, too. Then, for daytime, she has another idea. She is thinking of getting a perfectly trim, smoothly-cut black woolen coat with a little removable bolero jacket with loose three-quarter sleeves made of Persian lamb. And a tiny pointed Persian lamb hat to match. She can wear the jacket and hat over dresses when it isn't very cold. She can wear the coat alone with her silver foxes tied around her neck, in the new manner. Or, on our zero January days, she can put on the whole outfit. Plus maybe long underwear, because Jane feels the cold.

So there you have it—or at least part of the picture. And you can take my word for it, it's a pretty lovely picture up and down Fifth Avenue these days. Coachman coats with beaver sleeves and lapels. Leopard. Skunk jackets over suede vests and tweed skirts. College girls in brief chunky squirrel jackets and bright green skirts. Glamour girls in their silver foxes. Big business women in their constant minks.