Fashioning Anti-Fascism: National Sporting Uniforms and Outdoor Leisure Clothing in Britain Between the Wars

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• Order of Woodcraft Chivalry (OWC), founded by Ernest Westlake, 1917
• Kibbo Kift Kindred (KKK), 1920 led by John Hargrave
• Woodcraft Folk, 1925, group from the KKK established by Leslie Paul
Olympic Stadium, Berlin 1936

‘Ennobled by the memories of the past, athletes all over the world will learn to know one another better, to make mutual concessions, and to seek no other reward in the competition than the honor of the victory. One may be filled with desire to see the colors of one’s club or college triumph in a national meeting; but how much stronger is the feeling when the colors of one’s country are at stake.’


Thomas Curtis (USA), Winner of 100m Hurdles, Athens 1896,
'a fine young specimen of English manhood ... a very well-built young fellow of much symmetry and proportion ... ‘a beautiful complexion, an almost girlish look, a very frequent blush (which is the outcome of much modesty), a temper that will bear much chaff, and a chin that in times of depression looks as though it would fall off and explode on the floor.’


‘All the World's Sportsmen’, The Sphere, July 18, 1908
United Kingdom Team,
Opening Ceremony, London 1908

USA Team, Grand March Past, Stockholm, 1912. Plate 108, The Fifth Olympiad,
The Official Report of the Games of Stockholm 1912 (La84 Foundation)

‘Few of us would care to see England take its games quite in the American spirit, and the admiration which we feel for those splendid bands of Scandinavian gymnasts is not unmingled, in the case of most of us, with a certain shamed contempt.’
The British Olympic Committee is resolved to collect money sufficient to provide adequate funds for competitors while assuring the British Public that in those events in which Great Britain is to be represented the principles of true amateurism have in no way been sacrificed.

... no matter how humble or supposedly inconsequential, no form of uniform or official dress just materializes out of the blue. Every one is the product of prolonged thought, not just about the mission of the group being outfitted but about the meanings associated with its cultural function and authority.

Paul Fussell, *Uniforms: Why We Are What We Wear*
British Olympic Journal, June 1934

A Strong Finish...

You can't win unless you put your heart into your sport. A strong finish is the key to success. This 1936 Olympic Cap, made by Jaeger, was used during the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936.
Resistance, Subversion
Appropriation
Non-Uniformity
Costuming
Folk Nationalism

7th Northamptonshire Regiment
(18th Division), photo taken 9th August 1917 near Dickebush, showing cut down Service Dress trousers

Tank Corps Officer Western Front 1917, Irons/Windrow (1979), Tank and APY Uniforms since 1916

Men's Dress Reform Party 1932

Kibbo Kift
Kindred

John Hargrave, (1919) The Great War Brings it Home

Tribal Training, 'The Test of the Supple Limb' and 'The Art of Walking', in The Great War Brings it Home (1919)
Order of Woodcraft Chivalry


‘The uniform as adopted is very serviceable and hygienic, and withal picturesque. It is not recommended that it should be worn as an everyday garment in camp, but only on certain occasions, e.g., councils, walks, and treks...’
Their uniform was to serve as 'a symbolic violation of the social order'.

Suggested Designs and Decorations
Woodcraft Folk

‘every symbol, every totem, every song has its own peculiar value ... We are the revolution’.

Wedding of Miss Lily Chandler and Mr Richard Goss outside "Nia Hejmo"

The Wheatsheaf, July 1930, p.XVIII
‘a mark of respect for the smashed socialist youth movements of the continent’

‘green clad shock troopers of the people's fighting front’