

Basic Detail Report



Title Man's Uniform Chapeau Bras

Date 1848-1858

Primary Maker Lieutenant William Augustus Wetmore

Medium Hand-stitched, black, fur-finished silk over cardboard, with silk gauze crown lining, a leather sweatband, a cotton drawstring, metallic gold twist cord, silk ties, grosgrain ribbon edging, and a grosgrain ribbon ornament

Description Chapeau bras, completely hand-stitched of black fur-finished silk over cardboard. This hat was worn fore and aft (front to back, with the leaves over the shoulder). It has a 2 1/2-inch-wide black leather sweatband with a 1/8-inch-wide white cotton drawstring. The hat is lined in the crown with a thin, white, silk gauze with a black oval maker's label stamped on the silk (see Marks). On the outside on the proper right leaf is a piece of 1/8-inch-diameter, metallic gold twist cord that hangs down along the side of the crown (purpose unknown);

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the cord is threaded through a hole at the top of the leaf, drawn back out

through a hole one inch forward of the first hole, and tied in a knot. The hanging

end of the cord is tied in a knot at the end. The cord is eleven inches long. There

is black thread stitching extending in a diagonal line from the top front of the

proper right leaf downward towards the rear of the hat, suggesting that there

might have been a strap of two-inch-wide or greater metallic lace fixed to the

side of the leaf at an angle. The two leaves are fastened together at front and

rear with four black silk ties, two on front and two on back. There are stitches of

black thread at the center front and center back of the hat, suggesting locations

of metallic boullion tassels, presumably gold, because of the extant gold cord.

There is also a 1/16-inch-diameter, metallic gold twist cord wrapped around the

hat crown under the leaves and tied in a bow at the center front. The leaves are

edged in a 1/4-inch-wide, black grosgrain ribbon folded over the edge of each

leaf. In the center of the proper left leaf is a "star", made of 1/4-inch-wide, black,

silk grosgrain ribbon, which appears to fasten the leaf to the side of the crown.

The proper left leaf is half an inch higher than the proper right leaf. At top front

of both leaves are thin leather sleeves, suggesting they were used for holding

feather plumes. Both sleeves are about one inch wide by four inches long.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (height of proper left leaf x depth point to

point): 21 x 18in. (53.3 x 45.7cm)