

Basic Detail Report

Title Chapeau Bras and Original Box

Date 1800-1805

Primary Maker Major Samuel Deming

Medium Hat (a-c): Hand-stitched beaver fur or beaver and rabbit fur felt, (originally) silk lined, with a leather sweatband, silk or silk blend ribbon trim, a rib-woven silk faille cockade, gold boullion cord, and a gilt button. Box (d-e): Thin cardboard lined with plain paper, with leather ties. with a woven chevron pattern (two woven chevrons inset from the edge of the tape), black rib-woven silk faille cockade held in place with a length of 1/4-inch diameter gold boullion cord, a gilt button, black leather sweatband, originally had thin silk lining, black leather plume sockets.

Description Militia officer's chapeau bras, hand-stitched of beaver or beaver and rabbit fur felt. The hat is made to be worn with the points side to side, thus, the leather sweatbands on the inside are most substantial midway between the points. Two embossed leather panels, three inches wide and 7 1/2 inches long, are sewn to the crown of the hat behind each leaf. The front leaf, seven inches high by fifteen wide, is lower than the rear leaf, eight inches high by fifteen wide. The rear leaf is cut in a semi circle, but the front leaf is rounded, then flattened on the upper portion of the leaf. The leafs are fastened together by means of 1/8-inch-wide, black silk braid ties affixed to the front and rear leaves, just above the fold of the crown. The black tape trim edges the front and rear leaves; it is folded in half over the edges of the leaves. On each leaf, there are pieces of this same

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tape extending diagonally upwards and outward (in a V shape) from the crown

toward the outer edge of each leaf. Near the top of the front leaf, a black silk

faillie cockade is affixed, which is in the form of a bow made of a tube of silk

stitched and gathered in the center with gathering stitching. The outer ends of

the silk tube are fringed. The cockade is held in place by means of 1/4-inch, gold

boullion cord, fastened over a gilt, half-ball button, which in turn is fastened

through the leaf. The ends of the cord are sewn to the back side of the front leaf

and looped over and stitched in place. At the top underside of the front leaf are

two strips of black leather, one inch wide by four inches long, sewn along their

long edges to the leaf, in order to form sockets for black ostrich feather plumes.

The extant plumes are black ostrich and are formed into a curlique. On the

inside of the hat, the pointed ends of the hat are faced on the underside with

triangles of black leather. These are black, embossed leather sweatbands or

reinforcement panels. The crown was lined with a thin, sheer, black, plain-

woven silk stitched to the leather lining under the points and extending up into

the crown. The lining has deteriorated considerably. The two-piece box (d-e) is

thin cardboard, lined on the inside with plain paper. The box is crescent shaped

to fit the contours of the hat. The lower half of the box does not appear to have

any covering, however, its edges are covered with wallpaper consisting of a pale

yellow ground with an orange and white arrow motif. The cover of the box is of

the same cardboard as the bottom of the box, also lined in plain white paper. It

is covered on its top surface with a piece of the same wallpaper as the bottom,

but with more of the pattern visible. The pattern is alternating bands of the

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arrow motif and rows of concentric rings in orange and white. The edge of the cover is covered in wallpaper with a pale yellow or ivory ground with a black leaf and flower motif, highlighted in orange. The box is fastened by means of three sets of leather ties, one set at each point of the crescent, and the third set at the top curve of the crescent. The top tie on the cover is missing. The ends and sides of both pieces of the box are constructed with the ends stitched to the sides with linen thread in a looping stitch.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (hat height x length): 8 x 15 1/4in. (20.3 x 38.7 cm)