

Men's cherry red cap, ca.
1940s. Toronto Metropolitan
University FRC1993.08.059.



Toronto Metropolitan
University

A CHERRY RED MEN'S CEREMONIAL CAP

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One of the more unusual men's hats in the Toronto Metropolitan University Fashion Research Collection is a cherry red men's cap with a gold emblem, gold buttons, and gold braid. The name of the owner, Clarence B. Shulenberg, is embroidered on the inside. There are no associated records or documentation within the FRC related to the donation of this hat in 1993.

The hat measures 32 cm in diameter and 7.5 cm in height. It is constructed primarily by machine stitching, with a seam at the center-back of the crown. The cap has a cherry red self-fabric, which has the sheen of silk but perhaps the texture of acetate polyester.



Men's cherry red cap,
ca. 1940s. Braiding
detail. Toronto
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The base of the cap is adorned with a 3.5 cm wide decorative band made up of two gold ribbons, encasing a series of nine ruby red braids. Two 1 cm wide gold buttons adorn either side of the base of the crown. The buttons have a decorative motif containing a double-headed eagle perched atop a flag with a coat of arms on its chest with one crown above the heads. A gold braided chinstrap is knotted around the gold buttons, and is 37.5cm in length.

An emblem adorns the center front of the cap, and measures 5 cm in height and 4.5 cm in width. The emblem consists of an embroidered Celtic-style cross, made from a metal composite and threaded using a couching technique. In the center of the emblem is a green, embroidered tree surrounded by yellow, hand embroidered text reading "K.T. Comm Court of Honour".

The cap is lined in a yellow lining that has the sheen of satin but appears to also be a polyester material and made from a twill weave. A 4.25 cm wide brown painted canvas band, made to imitate a leather band, lines the base of the inside of the cap, and is whip stitched into place. The lining is whip stitched into place underneath the canvas band with black thread and lengthy stitches.

The owners' name, Clarence B. Shulenberger, is embroidered on the inside of the cap. A 1.75cm x 15.25cm red polyester ribbon is centered on the inside top of the cap and the name is embroidered with a chain stitch in cursive writing. There is a narrow line of padding on the inside of the crown, between self-fabric and lining. The padding runs the lengths of the name inscription and measures 5.5 cm wide and 15.5cm in length.



Men's cherry red cap, ca. 1940s. Emblem. Toronto Metropolitan University FRC1993.08.059.

CONDITION

There is tarnishing along edge of the metal composite emblem and small areas of discoloration on the self-fabric. As well, the gold buttons are tarnished on raised areas. The yellow chinstrap has a greyed appearance, likely caused by dust and dirt. The decorative band encasing the base of the crown also has an overall greyed discoloration, but appears to be more uniform. The ribbons in the band may contain a metal composite that is causing a more uniform aging. On the inside lining there are dark sweat/dirt stains along the top and front where the hat would touch the head and forehead. As well, there are small patches where the lining has been worn in areas. On the inside of the crown are wet stains with a patina color, located next to where the gold buttons are attached with metal wire. The canvas band is losing its paint and is peeking through in areas. As well, the canvas is frayed along the base of the crown.

ANALYSIS

Based on the decorative nature and the considerable wear of this cap, it is likely that this hat was used for ceremonial purposes. The large emblem placed at the center-front of the crown includes a Celtic cross and appears to be associated with the Scottish Rite style. The emblem, color combination, details and Scottish Rite style is in keeping with the design of the Masonic Lodge's current cap and emblem that is used by the group today.



Men's cherry red cap, ca. 1940s. Name of owner. Toronto Metropolitan University FRC1993.08.059.

The name embroidered on the inside of the cap may be associated with a Clarence B. Shulenberg from North Carolina. He was registered with the Raleigh Lodge #500 Freemasons, located in North Carolina. Mr. Shulenberg was a Grand Master Mason and was registered with Raleigh Lodge #500 in 1939, 1942 and again on November 4, 1961 in The Rosicrucian Fama as a Frater of the Eight Grade. The hat could date anywhere in between that span of time.

There are a number of sources that were consulted to consider the possible owner of the cap, as well as where and for what the cap was used for. Some of the most promising sources include the website of Raleigh Lodge #500, Ancestry.ca, a journal (#23) from The Rosicrucian Fama dated January 1962, a book called The History of Royal Arch Masonry Part Three where Mr. Shulenberg is mentioned.

Editor's Note

Kate O'Reilly is a fourth year Communications Student at Toronto Metropolitan University School of Fashion. She worked as an assistant to Collection Co-ordinator Ingrid Mida in Summer 2013.

This post has been edited by Dr. Ingrid Mida.