

# Arrow belt

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Arrow belt with lightning motif. Made of thick wool in red, green, blue and yellow. The colors appear to be synthetically dyed.

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Accession Number 2021.07.05

Period 1st quarter of the 20th century

Materials fiber, wool

Technique braided

Measurements 20 x 200 cm

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## Historical context

This belt is said to have belonged to David Molson, son of John Molson, founder of the Montreal brewery. It is said to have come from the Molson family chalet in Sainte-Adèle, Quebec. Its faded appearance is probably due to heavy exposure to the sun.

The thick wool is typical of the period. In fact, the “Worsted” wool used for 19th-century belts was used less and less after the early 20th century. This was mainly due to changing preferences and technologies in the textile industry. Innovations in the manufacture of synthetic textiles and the growing demand for cheaper materials gradually relegated Worsted wool to a more restricted use. During this period, the most affordable wools were less twisted. Yarns were thinner, so belts were thicker.

Arrow belts, created by French Canadians in the second half of the 18th century, become a cultural symbol in Quebec. Adopted by Native and Métis nations, their handcrafted production declined after 1880, with English imitations being produced in large numbers. The decline of the fur trade also contributed to their decline.

These belts reflect a multicultural identity. Although difficult to date,

they provide us with information on the cultural history of several territories and the socio-economic relationships that bind them together.

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Photo by Louis-Etienne Dore