

Arrow belt

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Collections / arrow belt



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Multicolored wool arrow belt with lightning motif. Its bangs have been cut, and the fibers are frayed. A label is sewn onto one end.

Accession Number 2021.07.52

Date 1950 an

Materials fiber, wool

Technique braided

Measurements 14 x 185 cm

Historical context

This arrow belt comes from a family in Knowlton, Quebec, who acquired it from a member of a racquet club. This sporting practice may explain its wear. Although we don't know exactly when this belt was acquired, we can assume that it was made towards the end of the 19th century. Indeed, during this period, arrow belts became essentially folkloric items: among other things, they were adopted by the very popular sport of racketball. The label reads "Barbara Buchanan", which may be the name of a previous owner.

When this sport lost popularity to field hockey and skiing in the early 20th century, it was mainly folk dancers and traditional musicians who made use of these belts. In the decades that followed, conservation and enhancement initiatives were gradually put in place by folklore researchers and a few dart makers. It wasn't until the late 1960s, however, that a major revival in the practice of darting took place. The darting technique was developed by French Canadians in the 2nd half of the 18th century. Initially symbols of social prestige, they became identity markers, then became associated with French-Canadian nationalism in the early 20th century. These objects 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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