**‘A warm House for the Wits’****[[1]](#endnote-1) The craft, trade or science of BRITISH Capping**

Kirstie Buckland

Headwear provides protection from climate, injury or dirt. It is not essential but is readily visible and can indicate age, rank and occupation. Since the 12th century rural workers had known that small hats with practical straight brims turned up or down protected them from sun and rain and could be decorated with badges of appropriate household or pilgrim allegiance. As such hats were adopted by varied social classes by the 15th century, chaperons and bourlets - which had evolved from the manipulation of simple hoods into elaborate structures displaying liripipes and dagging – were replaced by small hats or caps with or without brims. Linen coifs were often worn as under-caps for comfort and hygiene. This change was depicted by the artist Jean le Tavernier in his painting of *A Flemish Street Scene* dated c.1460, where the fashionable young men are shown in jaunty hats or caps, but most workers and traders still wear ponderous hoods.[[2]](#endnote-2)

This change was recorded by John Stow, the noted historian of 16th century city life, in his *Survey of London* (1598). He remembered when caps replaced ‘ .hoods of old time…worn, the roundlets upon their heads, the skirts to hang behind their necks to keep them warm, the tippet to lie on their shoulder…or to wind about their necks…’[[3]](#endnote-3)

Woollen hoods are excavated from archaeological sites, particularly the peat bogs of Denmark and frozen sites in Greenland[[4]](#endnote-4) while numerous round knitted caps, worn in the 15th to 17th centuries, survive in museum collections. It is impossible to know exactly how cappers worked at the speed required, individuals knit differently under different circumstances.[[5]](#endnote-5)

**The DEVELOPMENT OF CAPPING .**

The recognised occupations named ‘Hatter’ and ‘Capper’ evolved from the 13th century onwards to meet increasing demand. William ‘Capper’ was rewarded in 1270 by the Canons of Hereford Cathedral for supplying them with venison from the Royal Forest of Dean.[[6]](#endnote-6) As capping became a productive industry the manufacture and distribution increased into a ***‘*craft, trade or science’** employing eight thousand workers in London, with twice as many in the rest of the country[[7]](#endnote-7).

This was unregulated and threatening to the English government who complained of outrageous prices, and tried to control them with an early Cappers’ Act in 1488.[[8]](#endnote-8) Felted hats were fixed at 1s.8d. knitted woollen caps at 2s.8d. Though their statutory controls and ordinance rules were similar, hats and caps were made by different methods jealously guarded by master craftsmen. Adapting to their personal circumstances their specialist crafts became controlled and secretive.

Terminology remains confusing but **s**ome 19th century historians[[9]](#endnote-9) considered that a cap was neither hood nor hat and attributed the introduction of caps, especially red, to the ‘**Book of Worcester’** in1369**.** This may have beenthe opinion of William Worcester,[[10]](#endnote-10) who wrote in 1454 to amuse John Paston that ‘As either Worcester or Botoner I have 5s. a year, all costs borne, to help pay for the bonnets that I lose.’ [[11]](#endnote-11) Were ‘cap’ and ‘bonnet’ recognised as inter-changeable terms?Dictionary definitions describe both as usually soft and brimless but later caps, described by contemporaries as ‘Monmouth Caps’, were both stiff and brimmed, (see in Surviving Caps) [[12]](#endnote-12). Expected to fit comfortably, caps could be made of any adaptable wind and weatherproof fabric, but many surviving caps are made of knitted wool with structure and properties which tolerate archaeological conditions. Clear separation from other textile processes emerged as specific laws were passed to control capping production.

Britain’s ‘cappeknytters’ were recorded as working throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and by the early Tudor period were producing round, flat caps with straight, double-thickness brims to balance the wide-shouldered, square silhouette. Originally popular with fashionable men, they are depicted by painters such as Hans Holbein the Younger in his portrait drawings of courtiers. Sir Thomas More’s young son John wears a flat cap which Holbein clearly intended to show as a knitted example. John More’s father’s and grandfather’s caps could also have been knitted, as could the Duke of Urbino’s solid red hat of 1465-67 [[13]](#endnote-13) while some of Durer’s and Rembrandt’s portrait etchings indicate caps with a perceivable knitted structure[[14]](#endnote-14).

**FIGURES 1a,b,c,d.** Handmade copies. 2. Rembrandt, *The Artist’s son Titus*, about 1656. Etching. X8395. The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford’

John Stow records that before 1485 ‘the 1st of Henry VII, …the coverture of men’s heads was then hoods, for neither cap nor hat is spoken of’, until ‘Henry VIII… wore a round flat cap of scarlet or of velvet… The youthfull Citizens also took them to the new fashion of flatte caps, knit of woollen yarne blacke but so light that they were obliged to tie them under their chins…’ He remembered thatthe use of these flatround caps by citizens and young aldermen ‘so far increased….being of less price than the French bonnet…’.[[15]](#endnote-15) Stow was born in 1525 and trained as a tailor, so would have recognised the different textile processes. In his *Englishe Chronicles* (1565)and *Survey of London* (c.1598) he also recalled *‘*Spanish felts worn by Spaniards and Dutchmen during the early reign of Henry VIII. Formerly the English had worn ‘winter and summer, knit caps, cloth hoods and…silk throm’d hats’.[[16]](#endnote-16) By the time these works were published woollen caps were losing favour following restrictions enacted by Henry VIII and endorsed by Queen Mary in 1553, and were associated with the dress of city tradesmen, artisans and their apprentices.

It’s light for summer and in cold it sits

Close to the skull, a warm house for the wits

It shows the whole face boldly, ‘tis not made

As if a man to look on’t were afraid…

…For he’s no citizen that hides his head:

Flat caps as proper are to city gowns,

As to armour helmets, or to kings their crowns.

Let then the City Cap by none be scorned

Since with it Princes’ heads have been adorned.[[17]](#endnote-17)

## DISTRIBUTION AND ORGANISATION Of CAPPING

By the 14th century companies of cappers, capmakers or capknitters were established in most English wool-producing areas with good river connections. Unsurprisingly London was the foremost centre; in the late 13th century the cappers acquired their ordinances, (regulations, sanctioned by Parliament in 1318); followed by the hatters in 1347 and the Pinners in 1356. The city made 909 Freemen between 1309 and 1312 including a capper from Fakenham and a hatter from Hereford. [[18]](#endnote-18)

Yorkshire, and major midland wool towns, competed strongly with London. Cappers appeared in 1243 in York and were freemen from 1363 and 1385.Two small carved figures wearing close-fitting caps with tightly rolled brims were erected high up in the choir of York Minster in 1361; they are supporting the armorial shields of named aristocrats, Henry of Grosmont,1st Duke of Lancaster (1310-61), and William, Lord Latimer (1330-81). Their life-like heads have distinctive features, probably taken from live models.**[[19]](#endnote-19)**

William Morter, a ‘*capknytter*’, was admitted as a freeman of York in 1422[[20]](#endnote-20).The first recorded ‘felt-hatmaker’ was listed in 1461, with a ‘hatmaker’ in 1464. The cappers’ ordinance rules were registered in the York Council Book, no 11, in 1439 with an injunction (similar to that of Coventry) that ‘none of the said craft shall make no caps of Webb Yarn’ (i.e. weaving yarn, which was recognised as different), and further details appear in the York Memorandum Book of 1482 by which time cappers’ companies were prominent in many towns and cities.

In Nottingham Isabella Capper paid only four pence to be licensed to trade as a ‘cappeknytter’ in 1478.[[21]](#endnote-21) **w**hile in Southampton, aStaple Port which attracted numerous textile workers including cappers, an immigrant from Lille paid five shillings to carry on his art of capping in 1485[[22]](#endnote-22).

The York capmakers’ Corpus Christi play *The Woman Taken in Adultery* was presented in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, distinct from that of the hatmakers with whom they later combined.[[23]](#endnote-23)In nearby Ripon Marjoria Claton, another ‘*Cappeknytter*’, was charged with ‘incontinence’ with a harper in 1465. While he escaped conviction, her humiliating penance has been roughly translated : ‘She was ordered by the Church to walk at the head of the procession on four solemn days, with bare feet and legs and her hair uncovered, with a candle of wax, of half pound weight, burning publicly in her hand. She swore to avoid suspect meetings with the same man under pain of a double penance…’ However she soon returned to court accused of running a house of ill-repute with her mother and the same harper.[[24]](#endnote-24)

**FIGURE** 3 Ripon 1465 **MS** showing M.CLATON as‘CAPPEKNYTTER’

Court records suggest that cantankerous cappers were antisocial; the Mercers bracketed them with shearmen and fullers as ‘simple disposed persons of divers crafts’…who rioted and took wool off boats going to Calais[[25]](#endnote-25).But in some areas capping was a respected profession performing in the Corpus Christi pageants; in market towns like Shrewsbury, where a ‘capmaker’ was admitted as freeman in 1424, and Monmouth where cappers continued knitting and squabbling a century later, they became establishment figures administering, if sometimes breaking, the law.[[26]](#endnote-26)

Gloucester recorded cappers from 1375. No guild records survive but two 16th century cappers shared the distinction of being Alderman and Mayor three times. Sir Thomas Bell (1486-1566) who was also Member of Parliament, purchased the Gloucester monastery of Blackfriars as a ‘manufactory’ to employ three hundred cap workers, which Leland described as a handsome mansion,[[27]](#endnote-27) but commented ‘This house is made by one Bell a drapinge howse’ and Westgate was in use as the Cappers’ Hall from 1572-1575 suggesting that they had moved. [[28]](#endnote-28) Three years later they amalgamated with the Furriers, Shearmen and Dyers.

Chester’s cappers were knitters in 1486 and were in court, with a Feltcapper’, by 1487. Dependant on Pinners and Wiredrawers for materials, the cappers combined with them to perform the play of *Balaam and his Ass.* Later they turned to the Linen Drapers to share the production costs, with consequent amalgamation[[29]](#endnote-29).

Coventry was a prominent textile centre famous for its capping trade, practiced and recorded in City deeds of the 12th and 13th centuries.[[30]](#endnote-30) The Cappers Company of twenty-four members entered their rules in the Leet Book in 1496 concerned with controlling troublesome apprentices and journeymen, and by 1522 there were eighty-three cappers, double the number of weavers. No knitting is recorded until 1520, but the use of cloth yarn to make caps was condemned as ‘**deceitful practice’**. Leland wrote that Coventry rose by the making of ‘**Cloth *and* Cappes’**, not cloth caps. From low beginnings Coventry cappers prospered, had many wealthy mayors but felt was not introduced to their mystery until 1636.[[31]](#endnote-31) They were forced to combine with the pinners, saddlers and cardmakers (who made the wool carders that they used) but these withdrew leaving St Thomas’ guild chapel to the cappers - it survived the twentieth-century blitz on Coventry Cathedral in 1940 and part of the medieval chapel is still attributed to the Cappers Company.[[32]](#endnote-32)

### FIGURE 4a &b Cappers chapel, no permission required.

Hereford’s cappers performed in the Corpus Christi Day pageant in 1263 while the Journeymen Cappers were sufficiently prosperous to enter ‘*St. Katherina, with X and Tormentors* in 1503*’*[[33]](#endnote-33). From William Capper, the enterprising poacher of 1270, the calling survived in Hereford for a long time. Located midway between the wool centres of Leominster and Monmouth, the city had well developed river communications and easy access to the fine fleeces called ‘Leominster Ore’; the councillors, recognising the value of exports and struggling to reduce unemployment, licensed two merchants, George Holmes and John Frampton, in 1575,.

...to make in Hereford, and Bewdley, Co. Worcester, and the adjoining villages… a certain kind of foreign caps called Bonnettes Barberiscos, colerados de Tolledo, used to be worn in Afrycke in Barbary and to export them there… In consideration that cap-making is much decayed by reason of the great increase of hats of late years and that Holmes and Frampton are the first inventors of making this kind of caps.[[34]](#endnote-34)

Were ‘Bonettos Barbariscos’ the handknitted red cap, now called the ’tarboosh’or ‘fez’, and, seen in 2010, still made and fulled in north Africa by exactly the same traditional methods?(Fig.5)

These Hereford men challenged the success of ‘the sole importer into England ... of Spanish wrought and unwrought wool (i.e.worked or unprepared ) suitable for the making of hats and felts…which has increased the number and quality of felts…setting many of the Queen’s subjects to work…’.[[35]](#endnote-35)

**FIGURE 5 a,b,c,d.** Tunisian capmaker 2010. Fez. Fez shop 2010

Felt hat maker, Morocco,1992, 2016.

Richard Hakluyt, also from Herefordshire, offered advice on the search for the North East Passage in 1580 :

…Things to be carried with you whereof more or lesse is to be carried for a shew of our commodities to be made …Felts of divers colours. Taffeta hats, Deepe Caps for Mariners coloured in stamel whereof if ample vent (sale) may be found, it would turn to an infinite commoditie of the common people by Knitting. Quilted caps of Levant Taffeta of divers colours for the night. Knit Stockes of Jerzie yarn of orient colours, whereof if ample vent might follow the poor multitude should be set in worke…[[36]](#endnote-36)

Bristol’s customs records of 14th February, 1479, show that six gross of unlined Caps, valued at £5, with another two gross, (1,152 caps), were shipped to Iceland amongst mixed cargoes.[[37]](#endnote-37) While Bath lists only one capper, appearing in the Court of the Star Chamber in 1485[[38]](#endnote-38), by 1529 Bristol’s cappers were already complaining to the same Court that cappers from London were threatening their livelihoods[[39]](#endnote-39).

Two Oxford cappers, with one servant, were poll-taxed as householders in 1381 and, with the hurers, joined the Barbers’ Guild in 1499 with special ordinances. Unlike the barbers, cappers (who knitted) were freemen, and three years later an Oxford capper became Master of their Guild. By 1524 there were three cappers, worth £8, and two, with five apprentices, by 1558.[[40]](#endnote-40)

John Smith claimed that Monmouth caps could still be sold in the Shetland Isles in 1633. Reporting to the Viscount Brounker in 1673, he had patronisingly told the Earl of Pembroke that he found the Hollanders ‘laborious and industrious’ while the Shetlanders were ‘like unto the idle Irish’. [[41]](#endnote-41)

Cappers were obviously working throughout the country and producing thousands of caps, many of which were exported; they would endow ‘manufactories’ for their wares and sell them in shops. The calling was considered to be an art, craft, trade or science which gave high employment to rural communities.

### MATERIALS,

**WOOL**

Woollen goods, which can tolerate archaeological conditions, all originate with sheep or a few specific animals whose hair is rued (plucked) not shorn[[42]](#endnote-42). The quality of sheep’s wool depends on geography, geology, genetics and husbandry.

**‘**I praise God and ever shall, it is the sheep hath paid for all’ - a prosperous wool-stapler displayed his gratitude on his expensive new house**.[[43]](#endnote-43)** The medieval woollen industry was dominated by merchants of the Staple and huge flocks of sheep were bred and run on monastic land. The bulk of this production travelled to the Staple ports on the Channel coast, but in some areas local people bypassed the restrictions to establish a demand for personal products. This would please Margaret Paston (c.1422-1494) who lamented that ‘…wool should be provided for so that it should not go as it has been allowed to do before, and then shall the poor people live better by their working with it…’.[[44]](#endnote-44)

Medieval sheep were small, probably like today’s primitive breeds, until they were ‘improved’ by Robert Bakewell’s selective breeding programmes in the late 18th century agrarian revolution. Highly prized were the Ryeland flocks bred by the Cistercian monasteries at Dore and Tintern in Archenfield which are recorded in the breed society’s archive from 1343, and, throughout the 13th to 15th centuries,.supplied Leominster Priory with the ‘Golden Fleece’ named ‘Leominster Ore[[45]](#endnote-45)’. The Statutes Merchant of 1511 recognised the value of the Archenfield sheep, which were carefully shepherded and ‘cotted’ (housed at night) as their valuable fleece was primarily for superfine broadcloth. Leominster claimed no specific breed but valued the outstanding felting qualities of the small, finely crimped Ryeland fleeces which were, and are, superior to any other native British breed, each fibre said to be 1/750 inch in diameter. Their nearest rivals the Southdowns could boast only 1/660 inch with Cotswolds always longer and coarser. In the 14th century Ryeland fleece was priced almost double that of other breeds.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Extensive privileges were granted to Leominster by Queen Mary and James I, praising the ‘…better sale and dispersion of the fine wool produced in that neighbourhood …erefordshire breed and the name and occupation of Capper appeared through the area. James I renewed the charter in 1607 VIII, 151115

‘ whichgreatly encouraged the kingdom’s woollen manufacture [[47]](#endnote-47). It became a great market town, Archenfield wool was renamed ‘Lemster Ore’, the Ryeland breed spread and cappers were priced out of their basic material. By 1661 Thomas Fuller still regarded ‘…Lemster Ore being absolutely the finest in this county and indeed in all England.’[[48]](#endnote-48)‘The goodnes and finesse of the wooll*’* was a serious factor as it affected the country’s commercial reputation, so an Act of 1512 demanded the marking and pricing of caps according to the fleece used in making them, Leominster caps topping the list[[49]](#endnote-49)*.* Should this marking be found ‘in the lyning of the same cappe’it would identify the breed and place of manufacture. The regions that once grew the finest British wool retained the same fleece types until specialist native breeds were replaced, ultimately by today’s fast-growing meat breeds which are barely worth shearing for their wool [[50]](#endnote-50).

**WIRE**

Mechanical wire-drawing, replacing the inferior hand-drawn wire, was introduced to Britain in 1566. Government restrictions on imported Continental wire allowed William Humfrey, Assay Master of the Royal Mint, to establish a water-powered wire-making industry on the Anghidi stream at Tintern in the Welsh Marches. It was originally authorised to make wire from brass, iron and steel, so Christopher Schutz, a technician from Saxony, came to Tintern; after making a poor amount of brass or latten he soon succeeded with iron wire.[[51]](#endnote-51)

This monopoly transformed many aspects of the textile industries and coincided with the decline of capping. It was estimated that by 1597, five thousand workers across the country were working with Tintern wire, although Barnes Keyser complained that some of the local workers ‘were such dull learners’.[[52]](#endnote-52) And the ever observant John Stow commented that ‘. About that time (5 Eliz.) Englishmen began to make all sorts of pinnes, and at this day they excel all Nations and it may easily be proved that strangers have sold pinnes in this land to the value of threescore thousand pound a yere…’ [[53]](#endnote-53)

Caps were woollen spun, requiring wire cards and needles of wood, bone, quills or imported metal, so this wire was an important factor in keeping knitters at work. Early needles were cut from wire and made with one pointed and one blunt end[[54]](#endnote-54), not the familiar double-pointed needles of today, some were hooked and fine ones were easily bent or broken. The point is the only part of the needle to control stitch size and tension, the rest of the needle can be narrow, bent or wiry. One presumed knitting needle made of bronze, found on the Thames foreshore in London, has one pointed end with the other square cut, as have some wires which might have been made by country blacksmiths.[[55]](#endnote-55)

Few truly identifiable early knitting needles have yet been found in Britain, references to sets of ‘knyttinge Nedelles’ or ‘a pare of knyttyng pyns’ are quoted[[56]](#endnote-56) and possible metal specimens excavated in York and London. A narrow strip of garter stitch knitting on a thin metal wire was kept in an account book dated 1632 in Haddon Hall[[57]](#endnote-57) but the **‘**Roman’ rod from Cirencester which Heinz Edgar Kiewe said was used to knit, ‘wedged between the abdomen and thigh’ was later identified as an Anglo-Saxon dress pin.[[58]](#endnote-58) Knobs were added in the 19th century probably to secure heavy flat-knitted garments and shawls for which there were many alternative supports, knitting sticks, belts, and any available material found successful by the user.

**FIGURE 6a, b.** Anghidi wireworks, © AONB, permission Monmouth Museum.

The production of improved card-clothing (see Figure 7) and smooth metal knitting wires enabled the craft of knitting to transfer from coarse caps to fashionable stockings and the Wye Valley was conveniently equipped with quality fleeces, indigenous knitters and abundant iron from the Forest of Dean. As production of knitting silks increased, elegant knitted garments and stockings were worn at Court in the 17th century, and knitting remained a professional occupation for men and women until machine-made goods were available.

**KNITTING**

The history of knitting is longer than is generally appreciated. Usually presumed to have entered Europe from the east and/or north, knitted cotton stockings have been excavated from 13th to 15th century sites in Egypt[[59]](#endnote-59), exquisite silk handknitted cushions were preserved in medieval Spanish royal tombs[[60]](#endnote-60) (opened in 1942), and liturgical gloves found throughout France, Spain and Italy. The painted altar pieces of ‘Knitting Madonnas’ show that some multi-coloured knitting in the round was practiced on the Continent in the 14th century. The most famous depiction is the Buxtehude altarpiece by Master Bertram of Minden, c. late 14th century, which shows the Madonna fashioning the neckline of a shirt on multiple pins (today termed knitting ‘needles’) from a basket full of coloured yarns.[[61]](#endnote-61) The Knitters Guild of Paris was referenced from 1268 and became an important Guild;[[62]](#endnote-62) a cap was included in their 16th century examinations. In Borja, Zaragoza, the Zahortiga brothers’ painted Gothic altarpiece of 1460 shows St. Quinteria (said to be the patron saint of rabid dogs) knitting a stocking or sole-less gaiter in a clear zig-zag pattern in three colours using five needles which are painted to resemble wooden dowels with rounded ends. She holds the work correctly, her hands above the pins, but the artist forgot to paint any stitches on them.[[63]](#endnote-63) A 15th century woman’s cap with gloves was found in Latvia.[[64]](#endnote-64) In Sweden the earliest example of knitting is a small glove in the 1627 Sture costume collection in Uppsala Cathedral and in Denmark, (where Copenhagen has a collection of 17th century woollen caps), a knitted scrap is provisionally dated to 980 AD.[[65]](#endnote-65)

In Britain cap fragments are thought to provide the earliest European evidence of knitting with wool – a shaped fragment from a late 14th century London site at Baynards Castle,[[66]](#endnote-66) others from the Castle Ditch excavations in Newcastle,[[67]](#endnote-67) a complete 16th century cap from Dava Moor survives in Scotland and Wales has the cap now in Monmouth museum. [[68]](#endnote-68)

Britain’s climate required practical garments, experimental knitters used local wool to produce warm, unsophisticated clothing for children or adults. Only the influential were permitted to wear garments of costly fabrics, and cutting cloth into circles wastes valuable material, so how did the cappers found and fulfil their ‘Mystery’? As early ‘Cappeknytters’ are recorded, knitting emerges as the likeliest method practised by the Cappers’ Guilds throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. There is as yet no evidence of ‘naalbinding’, an early technique familiar to other cultures using one needle and short lengths of yarn, made in Britain at this time. By 1512 the making of knitted hose, sleeves, petticoats, and gloves were regulated by law as well as hats, coifs and caps, garments that can all be knitted in the round. Cocke Lorell’s Bote, a popular song in 1515, included spinsters, carders and ‘cappeknytters’ in his boatload.[[69]](#endnote-69)

These examples show that knitting in the round was simple and effective. Using all plain ‘knit stitches’ on four or more needles held under the palms of the hands to control the needles from above and the yarn thrown usually by the first or second finger of either hand. This is well illustrated in books on the technique of knitting, especially by Montse Stanley and Richard Rutt, who devotes nineteen pages to it. [[70]](#endnote-70) The method produces quickly a smoother, flatter, even stockinet (or stocking stitch) fabric, suitable for fulling, than the more modern alternate plain/purl method and is also done by machine. The result is a spiral shape made by stitches which increase or decrease the circumference, extended (for caps) or tapered (for socks). Many early knitted garments such as baby jackets and silk ‘waistcoats’ were made in the round, cut up the centre front and bound with narrow tape. This method of knitting is still used for some Ganseys, which are tubular until the armholes are reached.

Since knitting is both technique and fabric, the one affects the other, as do tools, materials and conditions. Everyone knits differently and adapts to the required result. Individual methods vary, but who made, bought, wore, and discarded the excavated caps, and the construction of three-dimensional circular garments, will keep designers and re-enactors enthusiastically arguing, making and wearing personal replicas. Even with careful scrutiny, any interpretation is an individual’s perspective of any object at a given time, but age, excavation and conservation changes its shape, finish and structure. The finer-quality surviving caps were skilfully constructed with curved corners to the overlapping brims and the fine velvety finish raised with teasles is still visible on some well-preserved specimens.

The fifteen separate occupations that formerly participated in capping manufacture are listed in the 1571 Act (13 Eliz.1, ca 19)[[71]](#endnote-71). The first three are ‘Carding, Spinning, Knitting…’ followed by many fulling, raising, finishing and dyeing processes. (APPENDIX 1)

**FIGURE 7a** 20th century Carders used for the preparation of fleece. The leather backing holding the wire tines is termed ‘card clothing’.

**FIGURE 7b.** 20th century Teasle striker in frame, used for raising the nap.

©K Buckland

This proves that caps were made from short-stapled downland fleeces which are carded, not combed, in preparation for spinning on handheld drop spindles (known as ‘rock and distaff’) or simple hand-turned wheels.[[72]](#endnote-72) Spinners must always have the finished purpose in mind and cap yarn differed from weaving yarn in distinctive ways. When Lissott Bannour charged Robert Mason in 1548 with unravelling and stealing yarn the Monmouth magistrates recognised it as cap yarn, valued at twelve pence[[73]](#endnote-73).

Carding and spinning define any item before other processes influence the shape. The structure of caps depends on the prepared fleece, the spinning and plying tension, the number of pins, and the depth of fulling. To prevent distortion and curling edges on knitting or sprang, yarn must be plied (doubled), usually two single threads are plied on the opposite twist, and most caps appear to be two Z-twisted singles plied on an S-twist, or vice versa. In making these seamless circular articles the knitters needed elementary knowledge and evenly crafted ‘pins’. From the appearance of surviving caps, with evidence shown on the Buxtehude and Borja altarpieces, it is probable that the capmakers were manipulating a continuous woollen-spun 2-ply thread of downland fleece by looping it through loops on multiple straight-pointed wooden pins, economically producing circular stockinet (stocking stitch) garments in distinctive yarn. It is generally estimated that one spinner could supply five knitters in the time that five spinners, predominantly women, provided yarn for one weaver. The documented cappers of Monmouth[[74]](#endnote-74) appear to have been knitting in the modern fashion, working with multiple pins, stealing what was clearly cap yarn and abusing apprenticeship regulations. By June, 1644 the diary of Richard Symonds describes Monmouth caps as still being Bewdley’s only manufacture, ‘…knitted by poor people for 2d. apiece: ordinary ones sold for 2s., 3s., and 4s. First they are knit, then they mill them, then block them, then they work them with tasels (sic = teasles) , then they shear them…’.[[75]](#endnote-75)

If all the capmakers and capknitters were working similarly, knitting could be found as a professional ‘*mistery*’ in Britain from the 14th century or earlier

**FIGURE 8.** The words ‘Knyttyng de cappes’ , 16th January, 1548. © GRO/MBA.

Records of the Hundred Court of the Borough of Monmouth, vols. 6,2.1545-1550.

Permission Gwent Record Office, Monmouth Borough Archives (now housed in Ebbw Vale.)

**FINISHING**

A ‘capthicker’ had appeared in York in 1499[[76]](#endnote-76) and the finishing required special equipment. But Thomas Thickens, ‘*the* capper’ of Lincoln who died in 1580 possessed no tools for his trade[[77]](#endnote-77).

Roger Yelfe’s capper's inventory of 1561 valued two pairs of shears and pinnes at 3s., with a press, scissors and ‘birling irons, trenchers, irons, forcing shears and 8lb of wool’ as well as a quantity of **‘**Coloured caps, uncoloured caps, raw (unfulled?) caps… in The Shoppe**’.** Andrew Coxon, also from Bewdley, owned cappers’ shears and a coldpress.’[[78]](#endnote-78). Capping continued successfully in Worcestershire until the late seventeenth century when two named cappers in Bewdley were striking their own tokens, Walter Palmer’s token of 1656 shows a typically-shaped Monmouth cap, and Thomas Farloe’s token of 1670 a high-crowned brimmed cap, with button just visible.[[79]](#endnote-79)

Despite conservation some hats retain the lacquer (possibly shellac) used to stiffen 17th century knitted caps – resembling a poor man’s ‘beaver’. Countrymen should ‘…Cast off forever your two shilling bonnets, cover your coxcombs with £3 beavers…’[[80]](#endnote-80) Museum caps have not yet benefitted from expensive analyses of dyes and finish, and terminology also changes; the name ‘bonnet’ is familiar in Scotland and France where knitters were termed ‘bonnetier’ or ‘hosier’. Did this add a touch of French sophistication to England’s humble caps?

**FIGURE 9A & 9B. Tokens, Worcester City Museum**

**DECLINE OF CAPPING**

Following unsuccessful controls in 1488, 1512, 1563, 1565, 1566 and other statutory attempts to forbid the making or selling of inferior products or anything ‘of Felt but only Hats’ nor ‘any Cap of any Woollen Cloth not knit’ (1665), Queen Elizabeth made a gallant attempt to support the industry in the much-quoted Act of 1571. This demanded the wearing of woollen caps **‘**For the continuance of the Making of Caps, whereby many towns and many thousands of people have beenheretofore maintained...’ Every person older than five years but below a certain class or income should wear upon holy days (Sundays and holidays) ‘…one cap of wool knit, thicked and dressed in England, made within this realm of England and only dressed and finished by some of the trade or science of cappers’. Elizabethans valued their holidays, so this discrimination was resented and was largely unenforcable - although in 1583, William Shakespeare’s uncle Henry, like Thomas Grene, was fined for wearing a hat not a cap on Sunday[[81]](#endnote-81).

The Council of the Marches found in 1576 that the Statute was passed to procure the wearing of English caps for the benefit of the company of cappers, and ‘others employed in that craft’ which are listed as fifteen separate and distinct callings,[[82]](#endnote-82) but it failed to protect their ‘**craft, trade or science …** now in many places decayed**…’. Appendix 1**

This law affected the general population and was a rare attempt to enforce, rather than forbid, the wearing of certain garments by ordinary people. Women were meant to be similarly restricted and all citizens’ wives were ordered to wear white knit woollen caps, ‘unless their husbands were of good value in the Queen’s book or could prove themselves gentlemen by descent…’.[[83]](#endnote-83) The so-called ‘Statute caps’ were ridiculed and the Act was repealed in 1591[[84]](#endnote-84). There is comparatively little about hats in later legislation, more concern for the declining status of the woollen industry which had a worrying effect on the lower orders of society.

There were several attempts to simplify the complexities of official statutes before William Rastall, a prominentSergeant at Lawe, published the statutes still in force in 1588, written in English and printed by the Queen’s printer Christopher Barker.[[85]](#endnote-85) In his IntroductionWilliam Rastall explains his intentions – *‘*Here have ye, Gentle Readers, a Collection of the Statutes of England (from the beginningof Magna Charta unto this present time) which were before this present time imprinted, and which be now in force and effect ….’ His margin notes *‘*well considered shall stand you in as good steed as should a speciall calendar’. He also explains how his abridgement should be used and, considering the continuing complexities of legal language, his volume helps to understand the craftsmanship.[[86]](#endnote-86) Naturally the making and marketing of woollen caps, declining by 1588, was not a major concern for William Rastall, but while he gives eleven columns to ‘Apparell’ (the sumptuary laws) and 176 columns to ‘Drapery’ (‘The True Making of Woollen cloth’**)** he also cites seven of the Acts covering ‘Hattes and Cappes’ between 1482 and 1571 still valid by 1588.

Controls increased from 1512 protecting the industry from inferior imports and poor workmanship on pain of forfeiture and fines to be shared between the King and the whistleblower. [[87]](#endnote-87)Fulling by mill had been a cause of strife between weavers and capmakers since the 14th century. Thought to ruin caps, since 1376[[88]](#endnote-88) the finish of fine cloth was also affected, so under Edward IV it was forbidden to full caps in river mills, while prices were regulated according to the wool and dyes used. It was forbidden to import **‘**cappes or hattes made and ready wrought beyond the seas’,they must be well dyed by traditional methods: ‘…perfectly woaded, boiled and maddered, according to the true & ancient usage… and of a sufficient colour in every point afterthe goodnes and finesse of the wooll whereof they shalbe made….’[[89]](#endnote-89).

Fulling mills were also blamed for poor finish - caps had to be ‘well scoured and closed upon the bank and half thicked at the least in the footstocke.’[[90]](#endnote-90) While ‘…a mill would thicken and full more caps in a day than fourscore men and it was considered inconvenient to turn so many labouring men to idleness…’.[[91]](#endnote-91)

The effect on employment in rural areas resulted in Queen Elizabeth’s refusal to licence William Lee’s primitive stocking-knitting machine, protesting that she had ‘too much love for my poor people who obtain their bread by the employment of knitting...’*.*[[92]](#endnote-92) She understood that families of disadvantaged knitters would be forced to beg for survival. All governments fear unemployment which can lead to poverty, and then to crime.

Caps were also satirised – the Elizabethans’ Ballad of the Caps indicates the extensive choice and use:

The Monmouth Cap, the Saylors thrumbe,

And that wherein the Tradesmen come,

The sickly Cap both plain and wrought,

The Fudling cap, however bought,

The worsted, Furr'd, the Velvet, Sattin,

For which so many pates learn Latin;

The Cruel cap, the Fustian Pate,

The Perewig, a Cap of late:

**For any cap, what ere it bee,**

**Is still the signe of some degree**

This ballad was copied in *Antidote against Melancholy, made up into Pills*,[[93]](#endnote-93) 1720, each of its eleven verses identifies occupations by the different caps worn. Such ‘pills’ may have purged the Tudors of their melancholy but what did all these caps look like?

**SURVIVING KNITTED CAPS**

Although once exported in considerable quantities, (Table 1) knitted wool caps can be found in many museum collections. Most are poorly provenanced and dated but are recorded by curators and researchers sharing information. Surviving examples are similar in size and construction - knitted in the round in simple stocking stitch, fulled and felted for insulation, the stitches controlling the shape are randomly inserted to assist even fulling. They are typically flat caps as depicted throughout the 16th century - circular flat crowns averaging 25.5-28 cms[[94]](#endnote-94) - with knitted brims of double thickness, or close-fitting coif-types often with neck flaps, some possibly helmet liners with protective ear or cheek lappets. Old men might wear both together for warmth. Either type might be trimmed, or slashed to display linings of costly coloured fabrics**.** A central hole often indicates a missing button or stalk. The velvety surface napping wears away and the fulling obscures or distorts the knitting, so accurate stitch and yarn analysis is restricted, and while some show traces of familiar dyes[[95]](#endnote-95) the majority, buried for centuries, have degraded to a muddy brown. An example in Berne Historical Museum, part of the uniform of a 16th century Swiss mercenary, is said to be knitted from white wool, fulled and piece-dyed in red.[[96]](#endnote-96) Two small caps in the Victoria and Albert (V&A), with unusual single-thickness brims,[[97]](#endnote-97) and a few in the Museum of London (MoL) still show madder red in places.

Few silk linings survive but detached woollen linings are found, coarsely knitted and inserted to add strength and weather-proofing to the crowns. These linings are roughly cut round after fulling to remove the curled borders naturally formed by plain stocking stitch. The double brims of the flat caps are all-round single circles, half circles, or divided into two with curved corners and an overlap averaging approximately 3 cms. These are usually made in one with the crown, shaped to fit the head’s circumference. The same proportions are followed to shape the brim to the width of the crown or beyond – some examples have an internal extension to the brim cut, like a rough facing, to be tucked inside the underside of the crown to strengthen the head band. There are unattached single or double ear-flaps or shaped lappets which were made separately and sewn in place. [[98]](#endnote-98)

**FIGURE 10a Leicester.**

The majority of caps from the London area were excavated during City rebuilding developments in the 19th and early 20th centuries, discovered and distributed widely. It is debatable as to how they were originally rescued, but many made their way from the

**FIGURE 10b** Platt Hall (details of brims) © K.Buckland

excavators to observant collectors who protected them and later returned or sold them to different museums.

**FIGURE 11 a,b,c – 3 MoL CAPS**

The Museum of London’s early Tudor knitting is the largest collection in Britain. Two earlier collections, the Guildhall Museum (opened 1826) and the London Museum (1911) were amalgamated in1976**.** Over one hundred sixteenth-century examples of knitting were unearthed by workmen from seven 19th-20th century City building sites[[99]](#endnote-99). These places were familiar to John Stow at the time of Henry VIII and the cap-wearing youths recalled in his *Chronicles* and *Survey*[[100]](#endnote-100)*.* Most of the caps now stored in museums across this country originated from the same excavations. Several reasons are offered for such an accumulation of woollen caps found in this narrow area. Could so many have blown off in wear, or been casually thrown away by City workers when considered unfashionable? Perhaps they were discarded from a warehouse as unsalable export stock or ditched by an unsuccessful retailer or his creditors to become infill on wet ground. Their general condition is good but some appear well-worn and they are of various types, some flat, some head-shaped, some plain, some slashed and decorated. It seems unlikely that extensive fulling or dyeing was permitted so close to the City, but there were some workshops where unlicensed journeymen were allowed to refresh and refurbish old caps.[[101]](#endnote-101)

The MoL collection was entered online in 2010-12 and recordsa collection of fifty-nine pieces knitted in stocking stitch, cautiously dated from ‘1500-1599’ comprising 22 complete hats, 5 linings, 13 earflaps, 2 fragments, 5 other fragments, 10 socks, 1 sleeve, 1 mitten, (5 from Moorfield + 3 linings)**.**

Later additions to this collection were given anonymously or bought from John Seymour Lucas, an artist and theatre designer. The London Museum paid £1,000 for his collection of 17th and 18th century dress in 1911 and then purchased twelve caps, one lining, four earflaps and the child’s mitten said to have been found in Hill Street with two hats.[[102]](#endnote-102)

The six knitted caps in The Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall (Manchester Art Galleries) were also obtained from an artist who bought them from the excavations in Moorfields, as were two, one flat, one coif type, stored in the Bolingbroke Collection of the Castle Museum, Norwich, (gifted in 1961)[[103]](#endnote-103) while Leeds Museums and Galleries obtained one with K. Wright Sanderson’s collection purchased in 1949, said by him ‘to have been found at Finsbury, London, during excavations in 1929, preserved in peat”. [[104]](#endnote-104)

The Victoria & Albert Museum has thirty-one knitted caps and fragments including separate linings, also a partial cap made of leather.[[105]](#endnote-105)There is no accurate provenance for this collection, most originated from the same City sites, notably Worship Street, in 1901-03, some decades later, from 1913 to1958.

The British Museum’s finely knitted flat cap, decorated with three lines of silk thread to attach ribbon to the underbrim, is from the Moorfields site and was featured on BBC Radio 4, ‘*Shakespeare’s Restless World’* by Neil MacGregor, Director, The British Museum, on 25 April, 2012.[[106]](#endnote-106)

One of the MoL caps (No. A26841) has a large brass pin attached and another (No.5000) contained an Edward III (1327-1377) half-noble gold coin (No.96.63/327), hidden in the double brim.[[107]](#endnote-107) Two flat caps in the Cuming museum, Southwark, labelled ‘temp. Henry VII’ and excavated in Finsbury in 1868, were conserved and researched in 2003; one of these contained a similar Edward III half-noble gold coin concealed in the brim.[[108]](#endnote-108)

**FIGURE 13a &b** - 2 Cuming caps and their labels, (©Julie Botticello) courtesy of Cuming Museum.

This prudent custom, for security or good luck, was still practised in the late 17th century by the merchant seaman, Edward Coxere. When captured by the Spanish and stripped of most of his clothing, he stuffed his gold ducats into his shoes and into the double brim of his ‘Monmouth Cap’.[[109]](#endnote-109) The longer crowns of ‘stocking caps’ could also be doubled over to form a purse.

Unique so far is the ‘Monmouth Cap’ from the small market town on the English/ Welsh border which had access to Tintern Abbey’s Ryeland fleeces and close maritime links with Bristol[[110]](#endnote-110) – From 1449 Cappers prospered and established the main local industry producing a distinctive product which became so familiar that the name was self-explanatory. The only surviving example of its kind is a seamless knitted, headhugging helmet-shaped cap, carefully shaped and finished with button and loop, displayed in Monmouth’s Nelson Museum, but it was once known across the world. Many thousands were made, exported from the major ports of London and Bristol and worn throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1662-1663, 3,619 dozen Monmouth caps were exported from the port of London alone valued at 4,343.9s.0d, which amounts to 43,428 caps at approx 2s. each.[[111]](#endnote-111) In America ‘One Monmouth Cap’ costing one shilling topped the 1622 ‘*Declaration*’ advising early settlers to prepare themselves for the future they faced in Virginia with ‘…such necessaries as either private families or single persons shall have cause to furnish themselves with,… For prevention of the like disorders…as some persons which have transported themselves without provisions necessary to sustaine themselves***…*’** Captain John Smith complained that too many unskilled gentlemen adventurers arrived to build the settlement at Jamestown.[[112]](#endnote-112).

No convincing provenance is available for Monmouth’s specimen but it may have come from The Monmouth Cap Inn in a remote corner of the county which is now a private house, but was required to retain the inn sign showing the cap’s image. Shakespeare was familiar with the article calling it an ‘honourable badge of the service’ in 1599. He claimed that Welshmen wore leeks in their Monmouth caps on St. David’s Day at the battle of Crecy - the Welsh Guards still wear leeks on their uniform caps on 1st March every year.

This strange little cap, which has only fifty-nine stitches in circumference, is exhibited in the Local History area of Monmouth’s Nelson Museum and is visited by many admirers. A recognisable copy made of natural black wool was photographed in the Tasmanian Museum at Hobart, labelled in 1995 as a convict’s ‘Hospital cap’ (No.S627) but repeated enquiries about it remain unanswered. Leaders of the Welsh Chartists were tried and convicted in Monmouth’s Court House in 1840 and deported to Van Dieman’s Land. It is possible that they took a locally made cap with them.[[113]](#endnote-113)

**FIGURE** **14** Cap in Nelson Museum, Monmouth. No. NM&LHC00001. Photographs©K.Buckland

Particularly interesting are the two stiff, wide-brimmed, high-crowned, knitted hats, in The Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia.[[114]](#endnote-114) A third is slightly lower in the crown, but these all ermitaggHimitate the fashionable felt hats of the 17th century and were identified as ‘Monmouth Caps’ by their knitted construction. They were bought in Amsterdam or London for Czar Peter the Great when he travelled in Europe posing as a shipyard worker in 1697. Unusually tall, over 6.ft.6ins, with a distinct facial twitch and a small head, the ‘Father of the Russian Navy’ claimed to be working incognito, though few contemporaries were deceived, and Daniel Defoe later described this subterfuge from an eye-witness account, naming his ‘Monmouth Cap’ as part of the Czar’s disguise.[[115]](#endnote-115) These three hats were made with cast-off edges to the double brims similar to the Monmouth Cap with which they are compared but are artificially stiffened, one has a velvet underbrim and two have linings (probably added later). They were never buried and have been cared for in St. Petersburg with the rest of the Czar’s wardrobe of 270 items, from his baby clothes, working and hunting dress, to embroidered European court suits - a remarkable survival in Russia’s subsequent history.[[116]](#endnote-116) Similar unstiffened high-crowned knitted caps are displayed in the National Museum in Copenhagen, Denmark, and shown on their website. The Copenhagen Museum has four others.

**FIGURE 15a&b** 2 views Hermitage caps. © K.Buckland

Ireland’s ‘Bog Bodies’ have disclosed unusual caps in good condition. From the raised bogs in midland areas, or blanket bogs from the mountains and western seaboard some were found on bodies murdered or sacrificed, and catalogued in the 19th century[[117]](#endnote-117). One is a typical 16th century finely-knitted flat cap of brown wool with all- round brim. Others were recorded in 1909 as ‘Two hats found in a bog at Boulabane, Co. Tipperary, 15th or 16 century, were found by Mr. Quinlan and purchased [by] Mr. John Walsh for £1.0.0’. These are not knitted but fashioned from a single piece of felt, 6.5-7mm thick, seamed and whip-stitched and covered with attached thrums, stitched into the felt before making up.[[118]](#endnote-118)Another is made from coarse Tabby woven cloth, single warp and weft, covering the head and neck, overstitched (edge to edge) and strapped under the chin with a stemmed 3,7mm diameter button at the side (1946.359). [[119]](#endnote-119)

**FIGURE 16a&b,** National Museum of Ireland caps. NMI Ref Nos 1909 -66, 1909 – 67 **16c.** **Thrum Cap** made by © K.Buckland As shown in Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti Antichi et Moderni, Tome 11,* (Paris 1860 edition) plate 288.

Thrum caps, using the discarded ends of a weavers’ warp which were available cheaply, were associated with sailors who made much of their clothing themselves seeking an economical process that would repel water:

The Sea-man with his Thrumb doth stand

On higher parts then all the Land; [[120]](#endnote-120)

The thrum cap makers of Norwich were exempted from most of the statutes, but the ‘weavers shall not leave the thrumbes of the bayes longer than one quarter…’,[[121]](#endnote-121)the same length as the thrums attached to the caps in Ireland.

More precise dating and purpose is offered by shipwrecks, although no fully thrummed caps have yet emerged. Henry VIII’s admired warship *The Mary Rose* sank in public view in the Solent on 19th July 1545 with the loss of 500 lives. She contained two woollen flat caps with split brims, five square silk linings (A1238/1 has drawstring still in place) four bands, and a silk velvet Barber-Surgeon’s coif with silk lining and braid trimming as depicted by Holbein in his painting of the inauguration of the Barber-Surgeons’ Guild in 1540olbein iHhH. A similar satin one is badly degraded.[[122]](#endnote-122)The experienced ship’s company of the*The Mary Rose* were mostly healthy young fighting men; the flat caps were found on the Orlop deck (position 09) with archers’ equipment but modern archers find this shape unstable in use.

**FIGURES 17, a,,b,c, d**

Mary Rose, (Geoff Hunt, PPRSMA.)

Archaeologist’s drawings. Woollen flat cap, No.81A0904 With silk lining and ribbon.`© Mary Rose Trust .

Barber Surgeons coifs. permission Mary Rose Trust ©Mary Rose Trust.

The *Gagiana,* a Venetian merchant vessel, sank near the island of Gnalic, now in Croatia, on 14th October 1583 with eight black wool flat caps and other textiles in an iron-bound chest, probably intended for trade. These were badly damaged by rust and salt water but two caps were conserved by Abegg Stiftung in the 1970s.[[123]](#endnote-123)

*HMS de Braak*, a Dutch warship commandeered by the British, sank in the Delaware River in 1698: 26,000 artefacts were retrieved including one knitted hat, similar to the Hermitage’s ‘Monmouth caps’ but with a lower crown and a narrower brim,.[[124]](#endnote-124)A similar stiff, brimmed cap in a private collection was made in exactly the same method with the same edging, probably naval and originally tarred over the knitting. It was excavated in 1970 from an 18th century site on the New York waterfront and conserved by the Smithsonian[[125]](#endnote-125).

**FIGURE 18a 18b** HMS De Braak 86-13-4066A ; Frank Kravic’s U.S. cap

Both Copyright© K.Buckland

Later shipwrecks contained appropriate types of headwear and accessories. The 18th century *General Carleton of Whitby* had one brown and white patterned cap, now thought originally polychrome, knitted with fringing around the bottom. This cap was found resting on two stockings, gloves with fringing and mittens without.[[126]](#endnote-126)

Two others, described as ‘toques’ or ‘tuques’ were retrieved from the wreck of the French frigate, *Le Machault*, which was scuttled at the Battle of Restigouche on 8th July 1760.[[127]](#endnote-127)A similar item, probably made from a knitted garment was recently (2013) found in North Carolina[[128]](#endnote-128) and many more of assorted styles were found by excavators on Spitzbergen and other northern settlements. Seven from Groningen, Holland, were displayed in 2014 in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, and captioned :

‘In 1980 archaeologists investigated the graves of 185 Dutchmen – whale hunters and workmen of the train oil refineries – who had died on or near Spitzbergen during the 17 century. The skeletons were still wearing their knitted woollen caps. Each cap was individualised, the men recognised one another only by the pattern of stripes on the caps. The men were bundled up so tightly against the fierce cold that only their eyes were visible.’[[129]](#endnote-129)

The spinning and knitting of some of the polychrome outer caps which these whalers wore over warm linings is remarkably fine and skilful, they were possibly made by the seamen-owners. A similar brimless cap has been excavated from the cemetery of a Basque whaling station at Red Bay, Labrador, where The San Juan sank in 1565.[[130]](#endnote-130) (TABLE 1).

**THE VALUE AND PRICE OF CAPS**

Behold the bonnet upon my head,

A starying colour of scarlet red

I promise you a fine thread

And a soft wool,

It cost me a noble ‘**[[131]](#endnote-131)**

London mercers and haberdashers stocked hats and caps during the 14th century, but it is unclear whether ‘hatters’ and ‘cappers’ were then makers or dealers. The 1378 London inventory of Thomas Trewe, ‘haberdasher’, lists sixty-seven caps of various quality and colours valued at £1.11.1 but just two hats, valued at 9d:-

One dozen of caps, one half of which are of red colour

and the other half green ; 2s8d

One dozen of white caps, called ‘Nightcapppes’ 2s.3d

Two dozens of woollen caps of divers colours, 16s.

6 caps of black wool, 4s.

5 caps of blue colour and one cap of russet, 2s.6d.

5 children’s caps, red and blue, 2s.6d.

One dozen and black hures, 4s.

One black hure, 4d.

2 hair camises, 12d.

One red cap, 7d.

One other cap of russet, 7d.

One hat of russet, 6d.

One white hat, 3d.

One wooden block for shaping caps, 2d.

The price of a cap‘....knit-made by some of the trade of cappers...’ was regulated in many Acts from 2s.8d. in 1488[[132]](#endnote-132). Andrew Coxon, capper of Bewdley, the ‘hole summe’ of whose goods amounted to £3.15.3. in 1547 owned raw, hard and old caps priced from 2d. to 1s. each, with cappers’ shears (16d.) and a cold press (8d.)’[[133]](#endnote-133). The Worcester capper, Roger Yelfe, had a quantity of ‘Coloured caps, uncoloured caps, ‘raw, hard, and an old cap’… in ‘The Schoppe’[[134]](#endnote-134)to the total value of £4.18s.2d..

Thomas Capper of Monmouth also owned a shop, when, in 1561, the Borough officials lost important documents, given under the Exchequer Seal, they were found ‘..torn and sewed together again and Thomas Capper used them instead of a cloth to lay under his caps in his shop window’ [[135]](#endnote-135) Drake and Hawkins took thirty-six dozen Monmouth caps in two qualities to the West Indies in 1596 costing 2s 2d and 1s.8d each, more than shirts, shoes and linen breeches, less than worsted stockings.[[136]](#endnote-136) Monmouth Caps were surprisingly expensive, prices varied from a few pence to several shillings; while cottagers were paid 2d. or 3d. to knit them which probably included spinning the valuable fleece, they could sell for double the price of other caps. Lord Gilbert Talbot considered a Monmouth cap an appropriate New Year’s gift for his father in 1576,[[137]](#endnote-137) while by 1637 Lord Conway’s steward would pay eleven shillings ‘..for a Monmouth Cap for my Lord….’[[138]](#endnote-138) American inventories and orders gave their values in terms of the anticipated tobacco crops, rising to fifteen pounds of tobacco for each Monmouth Cap in 1673 but always anxiously dependant on the weather.[[139]](#endnote-139) Leominster wool caps made from ‘Lemster Ore’, their quality marked ‘L’, cost double those of Cotswold wool and surpassed all others at 3s.4d in 1512.

**Who wore caps?**

In 1459 Sir John Fastolf left one knit cap amongst his extensive wardrobe which included many expensive hats and hoods,[[140]](#endnote-140). Bess of Hardwick bought two for her baby daughter Frances.**[[141]](#endnote-141)** Some clerics were portrayed in square-shaped caps, ‘The three-cornered caps of popish priests’[[142]](#endnote-142) but if this shaping was achieved by the fulling, it has now been lost.

**FIGURES 19a** Canterbury cap. Dr Busby, 1606-1696, Headmaster, Westminster School. **19b**. Dr. Butts? in ‘scallopped’ cap

Fashionable hats, indicating superior status and wealth, were denounced by Philip Stubbes,[[143]](#endnote-143) and ‘Flatcap’ became a symbolic name for tiresome teenage apprentices who rioted seriously in 1517, 1590s and between 1604 and 1642. ‘The capped’ were seen as gangs of unruly young men whom, according to John Stow, ‘the pages of the court in derision called flat caps’.

Each degree has his fashion, it's fit then,

One should be laid by for the Citizen,

And that's the Cap which you see swels not hye,

For Caps are Emblems of humility;

It is a Citizens badge, and first was worne

By'th Romanes; for when any Bondmans turne

Came to be made a Freeman: thus 'twas said,

He to the Cap was call'd; that is, was made

Of Rome a Freeman, but was first close shorne,

And so a Citizens haire is still short worne. [[144]](#endnote-144)

Shakespeare, who thought that ‘apparel oft proclaims the man …’,[[145]](#endnote-145) also used a ‘Statute Cap’ to symbolise the lower orders (‘Better Wits have worn plain Statute Caps’[[146]](#endnote-146)) and poor behaviour, (‘the commons made a shower and thunder with their caps and shouts’ …Hurling their caps in the air and hooting…’.[[147]](#endnote-147))

The capmakers were once professional men and women, tightly regulated in their manufacturing practices and pricing, watched and controlled by their masters. As carders and knitters they depended on the wiredrawers, pinners and cardmakers for basic materials. They established ‘manufactories’ for knitted caps and sold them in shops. Capping was their ‘Mystery’, jealously guarded, practical, profitable, and briefly fashionable until its rapid decline.

Until the early 20th century a gentleman’s position was announced by his hat collection including nightcaps and smoking caps for indoor wear. Always easily interpreted, hats and caps remain a symbol of identity from the Romans to today’s military berets first approved in 1924, and ubiquitous adjustable ‘baseball’ caps. Professional sports teams are still ‘capped’ and most departments of the armed services show their allegiance on their heads. Both Field-Marshall Montgomery and Che Guevara were proud to be recognised by their symbolic black knitted berets.

**FIGURE 20a, b.**

(Public photo of Montgomery) Knitted smoking cap, made for Sir Ian MacKellen, National Theatre. Or complimentary Baseball cap © K.Buckland

In the cold winter of 1996 Madeira’s residents stayed cosy in their traditional knitted bobble caps and the 19th century ‘Beret Basque’ maintained its position on loyal French heads until the last manufacturer Beatex, founded by the Laulhere family in 1840 at Oloron-Sainte-Marie using Pyrenean wool, was taken over by a company supplying military equipment [[148]](#endnote-148). Laulhere had a close association with NATO producing 200,000 coloured berets of distinctive shape each year.[[149]](#endnote-149)

**FIGURE 21a, b.`** (Chose as preferred) Madeira, February 1996 © K. Buckland

Women are still expected to wear hats in certain arenas and society milliners are rewarded with honours. Early photographs of crowd scenes show working-class men in flat caps with baggy crowns and a stiff single brim to shield the eyes. Children were formerly forced into school caps or berets bearing an identifying badge. Caps make useful commercial advertisements so tractor and lorry drivers wear donations from ambitious companies. Shapeless knitted bags now flop in ungainly ways all year, indoors and out, on the trendy young – why?

In the twenty-first century rebellious Breton fishermen and agriculturalists have restored the emblematic ‘Red Cap’ of peasant revolution. Since October, 2013, ‘Le Movement des Bonnets Rouges’ has revived the anti-tax rebellion of 1675, by disrupting transport and blocking arterial roads with mass demonstrations when, wearing bright red caps, they protest against unfair environmental taxes and poor prices for their produce.[[150]](#endnote-150)

There is still support for the Tudors’ view that

**Any Cap whate’re it be**

**Is still the Sign of Some Degree.**

1. Thomas Dekker, ‘ *The Honest Whore’, a citizen comedy*, 1604-1635,. Part 11,.Act 1, Scene 1, no page numbers. Publ. London: Printed by Elizabeth All-de, for Nathaniel Butter, 1630. (Full text accessed 17.7.2016) [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Jean le Tavernier, *Conquests de Charlemagne*, in Brussels MS Bibliotheque Royale 9066, fol.11. Illustrated in M.Scott, *Visual History of Costume, The 14th & 15th centuries*, Batsford, London. 1986, p.93 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. John Stow ‘*Survey of London’ reprinted 1603.* Oxford 1908, e`d. C.L. Kingsford, pp 194-95 British History Online, accessed 29.6.2016. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Else Østergård, *Woven into the Earth,* Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, Denmark, 2004, pp203-218. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. K. Buckland, ‘The Monmouth Cap’, *Costume*, Vol: I3, London 1979 ed.. Dr. Ann Saunders, p 23; (The Cathedral Archivist is helping with this) [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. W. Rastall, Statutes of the Realm, 13 Eliz. Cap.19 ‘Hattes & Cappes’,1571. All statutes cited are from the transcriptions of William Rastall, *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes then in force from the beginning of Magna Charta …until the ende of the Session of Parliament holden in the 28 yeere of the reigne of our gratious (sic) Queen Elizabeth, Imprinted at London by the Deputies of Christopher Barker, Printer to the Queene’s most excellent Majestie’* 1588*.* Original volume, 1588, Archive and Special Collections, Bangor University. Page numbering is irregular, some missing. In 1607 Rastall was described as *‘…*An eminent and learned lawyer that lived in Queen Mary’s days and was a Justice of the Common Pleas; he made an Abridgement of the Statutes which bears his name to this day’. in Dr. Cowel, *A: Law Dictionary: or the Interpreter of Words & Terms Used either in the Commmon or Statute Laws…of England, and In Tenures and Jocular Customs.* London, 1708. No page numbers, found under ‘R’ for Rastall. Author’s collection. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. W. Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes..* 1588. *.*Statutes of the Realm, 4Hen VII, ca 9,’Hattes & Cappes’, 1488.. Prices were regulated, W. Felkin, 1967, p. 16) [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Charles Heath ‘*Historical and Descriptive Accounts of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Monmouth’* 1804 (Locally Published and printed by the Author, no page numbers). J R Planche′ (1796-1880) may have copied it into *Cyclopedia of Costume and Dictionary of Dress…*, vol. 1, London, 1876. (British History Online Accessed 7.5.16.) as these two men could have met. Early paintings such as Paolo Uccello’s *A Hunt in the Forest* , c.1470, (Ashmolean Museum, A79, Oxford) show cap shapes coloured red. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. **Possibly** William of Worcester’s ‘*Annales rerum Anglicanum* 1324-1491. C.U.P., 2012, ed. J. Stevenson, ISBN 9781139163361. His *Itineraries* ed. J.Harvey, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969, gives a list of clothing on p. 152n, no caps are included. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. *Selection from* *The Paston Letters*, as transcribed by Sir John Fenn, Ed. A.H.R.Ball, (Harrap, London, 1949), p.292-3 (1454). Worcester was assistant to Sir John Fastolf and he used both names, Botoner was his mother’s maiden name. *Illustrated Letters of the Paston Family*, ed. Roger Virgoe, Macmillan London, 1989 p.80 (c.2.9.1454). [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. D. Defoe, *An Impartial History of the Life and Actions of Peter Alexowitz written by A British Officer in the Service of the Czar,* 1723, p 61 [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Hans Holbeinthe Younger, 1497/8-1543; drawing of John More, 1527-8. Royal Library. Windsor. 12226. Duke of Urbino 1420-1492, Uffizi, Florence, Piero della Francesca 1465-70, Tempera on Wood 47x33 cm [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Rembrandt, *The Artist’s son Titus*, about 1656. Etching. X8395. The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. John Stow ‘*Survey of London’ reprinted 1603.* Oxford 1908, ed. C.L. Kingsford, pp 194-95 British History Online, accessed 29.6.2016. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. E.Howes, *Additions to Stow’s Annales* *0r General Chronicle of England*, “*begun by John Stow….”1631edition, at London*, printed by Augustine Matthews for Richard Meighen, London, T. Adams, p.1038- lines 40-45, p.1039 lines 47-49. (Bayer Staatsbibliotek Muenchen) He is describing hats made of silk plush. www.Books.google.co.uk accessed 18.7.2016 [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Thomas Dekker, ‘ *The Honest Whore’, a citizen comedy*, 1604-1635,. Part 11,.Act 1, Scene 1, no page numbers. Publ. London: Printed by Elizabeth All-de, for Nathaniel Butter, 1630. (Full text accessed 17.7.2016) [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. I. W. Archer, *The History of the Haberdashers Company*, Phillimore, (Chichester) 1991, pp 2-9, 16. (also Philip Capper, 1389 & Edmund Cappemaker, 1392) [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Personal correspondence from York Minster Library/Archives, 23.11.04. The Rev. Purey-Cust, *The Heraldry of York Minster,* York, 1890. Illustrated in Michael Hicks, ‘*Who’s Who in Late Medieval England 1272-1485‘,* Shepeard-Walwyn, London,1991. Series ed. G. Treasure, pp108-10, 140-143. No later photographs available. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. *York Memorandum book of 1482.* Surtees Society, 120, 125, vols.1,11, (1911, 1914), Andrews, Durham, Quaritch, London, ed. M. Sellers. pp.283-288 *The York Memorandum Book, vol.133*. Surtees Society 186 Durham. 1969, ed. J W Percy. Freemen of York, Durham, 1422, p.133/4. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Records of the Borough of Nottingham, vol 11, 1399-1485. London 1883, B.Quaritch, Nottingham, T.Forman & Sons , pp.298-299. W.Stevenson. V.C.H. vol.6, London, 1882, ed. E.L.Guilford. . Primary source edition, author ‘Nottingham’, reprinted in paperback by Amazon, 2013. (I have a copy of the MS awaiting details, possibly number 20.) [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. ‘Bartelmy Donkerd of Lille in the district of Artois, Capper, gives to the town of his fine (5s.) in order to have freedom to carry on his art in the town aforesaid’. The Book of Remembrance of Southampton, Southampton Records Society, ed. H.W.Gidden, vol.11, 1303-1518, Southampton, 1928, p.71. (City Archive ref. SC2/1/2) [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. *The Plays Performed by the Crafts or Mysteries of York on the Day of Corpus Christi in the 14th, 15th, and 16th Centuries’*, Early English Text Society (No 24), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1885, ed. L. Toulmin Smith, p. 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. *The Acts of Chapter of the Collegiate Church of SS Peter and Wilfred, Ripon, 1452-1506*. Surtees Soc. Vol 64, Durham, 1875, ed. J.T Fowler, p 120 & 122. (**Figure 3** shows the MS entry) [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Acts of the Courts of the Mercers Company, 1453-1527. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1936, ed..L.Lyell, p.159. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. K. Buckland, ‘The Monmouth Cap’, *Costume*, Vol: I3, London 1979 ed.. Dr. Ann Saunders, pp 23-38;

    Top of Form

    Bottom of Form [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. John Leland, (1503-1552) *Itineries,* c.1535-1544. (vol.2 c. 1540*),* George Bell and Sons,London, 1907, ed. LucyToulmin Smith, p.58. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Gloucester Chamberlain’s Accounts. GBR/J/3/18.ff 44v-45, Sir Thomas Bell’s Charities, Gloucester Archives. Accessed 8.5.16. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Chester City Archives*: The Antient and Worshipful Company of Cappers, Pinners, Wiredrawers and Linnendrapers of the Chester City Guilds.* Quoted by R.H.Morris, *Chester in Plantagenet and Tudor Reigns*, Chester,1894 pp 316-7, 435-6., reprinted by General Books LLC (3.Jan.2010) [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. *VCH Warwickshire*, Vol 8*, Crafts & Industries,* ed. W.B. Stephens, 1969, p265 [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. M.Dormer-Harris *The Company and Fellowship of Cappers and Feltmakers at the City of Coventr*y, Cornwall Press,Ltd., London and Coventry, 1921. pp 5-28. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. *The Coventry Leet Book or Mayors Register, (1420-1555*).Transcribed and edited for the Early English Text Society by Mary Dormer-Harris, London & Coventry, 1907, p 572-792. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. R..Johnson (late Town Clerk) *Ancient Customs of the City of Hereford*, Hereford, 1882. p.85, 118. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. *Calandar of Patent Rolls, Eliz, 1 1572-1575*. 3050 : 10th Jan. 1575Publ. HMSO, vol.6, London, 1939. ed. C.T.Flower. ([www.WorldeCat.org](http://www.WorldeCat.org)., accessed 18.7.16). [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid 136:8th June, 1573. The wool of Spanish Merino sheep was being imported as Mancha (finer) and Byska (coarser) wools. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Richard Hakluyt (of Hereford), *Voyages and Discoveries* …; Penguin, 1972, ed. Beeching, , p 212-3: cited in Dorothy Hartley, *The Land of England,* (MacDonald & Janes, London,1979). p.235. Stamel was a coarse cloth usually red. Stockes were legcoverings. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Customs Account, 1479, Thomas Sutton, Thos. Croftes, and John Wildegris, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages,* vol.7, Bristol Record Society, Bristol, 1937, ed. E.M. Carus Wilson, p.253. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. *Somerset Star Chamber Cases, 1485-1574*, Somerset Record Society, vol.xvii, 1911, ed. G. Bradford, p.110. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. K.G Ponting , ‘Knitted Caps’, *Bulletin de CIETA*, No. 49, 1979/1. Eds. N.B. Harte and K.G. Ponting, pp. 78-81. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. *Victoria County History*, Oxfordshire. Vol.4, Economic History, ed. H.E.Salter 1979. Medieval Archives of the University of Oxford , pp. 45, 103, 107, fn31-33. O.H.S. ,lxx, 1917, lxxii, 1919. Craft Guilds, ed. A. Crossley, O.U.P., pp.312-327, C. Elrington, London, 1979, pp336-340.fn128v,330. (British History Online, 12.8.16.) [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Captain John Smith, ‘*Trade and Fishing of Great Britain Displayed with a description of the Islands of Orkney and Shotland (sic)*. (London, 1661). Toucan Press, St. Peter Port, 1976. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Cashmere goats, angora rabbits, alpacas or camels are some examples. Their hair has a different structure to wool. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. K.G.Ponting *The Wool Trade Past and Present*, Columbine Press, Manchester & London, 1961, p. 10. No references, but extensive.bibliography. He admired Eileen Power’s publications. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. *Paston Letters*, October, 1460. London, 1949, Ed. A.H.R.Ball, p. 110. (see ref.14) [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. K.Buckland, Monmouth Cap, *Costume 13*, 1979, pp 30 -31 [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Leominster, 1605 Charter. G.F.Townsend, ‘*Town & Borough of Leominster’*, London, p.85, 288. (HistoryofParliamentOnline.org., J.Ferris, accessed 29.5.16) . [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. T. Fuller, *The Worthies of England*, 1661, ed. J. Freeman, London, 1952, Monmouthshire pp 115-6. Herefordshire, vol.2, 116 (4to ed.) .p 68. (Wales not included). (P.A.Nuttall, Monmouthshire, vol 2, publ.T.Tegg, London, 1840, pp431-433.) [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. W. Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes…* 1588. Statute, Hattes & Cappes, 3 Hen. VIII, cap 15. 1512. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. K. Buckland, A Sign of Some Degree, *‘Text*’ 36, St. Albans, 2008, ed. S.Black, pp.40-46. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. H.W.Parr & D.G. Tucker. The Old Wireworks and Ironworks of the Anghidy (Anglicized spelling) Valley at Tintern, Gwent;. *H.M.S. Journal*, vol.IX, (1975. ) p.10. R.Rutt, *A History of HandKnitting*, Batsford, (London 1987), p.68. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Ibid. also *Water Powered Industries of the Wye Valley* S.D.Coates, Monmouth Borough Museum Services, (Monmouth, 1992), p. 9. Anghidi (authentic Welsh spelling, the county became Welsh in 1974) history, personal notes and discussions with S.D. Coates and D.G.Tucker, 1990s. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. E.Howes, Stows Annales, p.2038, lines 40-45 wwwBooks.google.co.uk accessed 18.7.2016. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. A brass or bronze specimen found in the Thames is approximately 6 inches long with one blunt end. Discussed with Geoff Egan at Medats in ??, as yet unpublished. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. G. Egan, unpublished research, discussed at Medats meeting, 200(4?) [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. J. Arnold*. Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*, Maney. Leeds, 1988, p 223. Coventry Wills, Joan Bruar’s inventory, 1555 (4) ed. by M. Hulton, correspondence in 2005, when preparing for publication. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. I photographed it in 1996, then exhibit No.71. No response to repeated enquiries. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. K. Buckland, A Sign of Some Degree, *‘Text*’ 36, St. Albans, 2008, p44. H.E.Kiewe, ‘*The Sacred History of Knitting’*, 1971, publ..by the author (Oxford, 1971). Plates 6,7,8… [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. R.Rutt,  *A History of HandKnitting*, Batsford, (London 1987), pp 33-36. A good selection is owned by the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Two (13th century) are in the Cistercian Convent of Santa Maria la Real de Huelgas, Burgos, founded 1187 by Alfonso VIII (1156-1214) & Eleanor Plantagenet of England (1160-1214). *Mil Anys de Disseny en Punt,* Terrassa Centre de Documentario I Museu Textil, 1997. M. Stanley, exhibition catalogue,.’Mil Anys de Punt. Pluralisme i interrogants’, pp 35-67. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. The altarpiece at Buxtehude, c. late 14th century. R.Rutt *A History of HandKnitting*, Batsford, (London 1987), pp 1-6, 27-49. (An online illustration quotes him.) Lise Warburg, Den Strikkended Madonna y Syd og Nord, *Cras 39*, 1984, pp79-92 [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. I. Turnau*, Knitted* *Caps & Hats in Europe from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century*, Bulletin de Liaison, du CIETA, No. 61-62, 1985, p.87. She also mentions knitted gaiters made in London in 1320. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Retablo Ystoria della Virgen Maria, attributed to Nicolas Zahortiga, 1460, Museo de la Colegiata, Borja, Zaragoza province, Spain. Personal visit and notes, 2015. No known publication. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Irena Turnau ‘*History of Knitting before Mass Production’* Institute of Material Culture, Warsaw, 1991, p18. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Lise Warburg’s unpublished lecture notes to The Early Knitting History Group, 1994, and correspondenc, with permission. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. E.Crowfoot, F.Pritchard, K.Staniland, *Textiles and Clothing, c.1150-1450. Medieval Finds from Excavations in London,* IV, (Woodbridge 2001) pp 72-5 . [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. *Archaeologia Aeliana,* An excavation in the Castle Ditch, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1974-6, pp191-2 ed.B.Harbottle & M.Ellison, Textiles, P.Walton pp.190-202; [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. K. Buckland, ‘The Monmouth Cap’, *Costume*, Vol: I3, London 1979 ed.. Dr. Ann Saunders, pp 23-38; [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Cock Lorell’s Bote, *A Satirical poem*, from an unique copy printed by Wynkyn de Worde, (1515) ed. E. F.Rimbault, , Printed for the Percy Society (London 1843) p10. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. R. Rutt *A History of Hand Knitting*, Batsford, London, 1987, pp7-26. Montse Stanley, *The Handknitter’s Handbook,* David & Charles, Devon, 1986, pp 29, 86. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. K. Buckland, A Sign of Some Degree, *‘Text*’ 36, St. Albans, 2008, p43-44. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. *Encyclopedia of Medieval Dress & Textiles of the British Isles, c. 450-1450*. Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2012. Eds. G. Owen-Crocker, E. Coatsworth, M. Hayward. K. Buckland, ‘Spinning Wheels’, pp539-40 [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. ‘..lanum et yaron videlicet capes yaron..’ *Monmouth Borough Records*, vol 6, 1545-1550. Monmouth Cap. *Costume 13*. p. 24. (**Figure 8** = MS entry) It may have been plied. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. 1524-1548. K. Buckland, *Costume 13,*  Monmouth Cap. pp24-25 [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. *Diary of Richard Symons*, 12th June, 1644. Camden Society. London, 1859. ed. C.E.Long, (Bewdley,p.14). Accessed 27.7.16. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Freemen of York, as ref before., 224 [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Lincolnshire Archives, Probate Inventory Thomas Thickens, Ref INV 64/164 [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Inventories of Worcester tradesmen, 1545-1614 Vol V *Miscellany 11,* (Worcester 1967) ed. A.D.Dyer. pp 1-67. London, PRO SC2 Portfolio 2210, no.16. The Goods of Andrew Coxon. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Two Bewdley Cappers Tokens, Worcester City Museum. The drawings appeared in an article by Mrs. J.F. Parker, ‘*Old Bewdley and its Industries’*, Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society, Worcester, 1932. Plates vi & vii, p.7. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. T Dekker, Choyse Drollery (1656). [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. V*ictoria County History. Warwickshire*, vol.11 ed. W.B. Stephens, (1969), p 266. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. Appendix 1 or see ‘*Text’*., vol 36, 2008, p43.) [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. E.Howes *Additions to Stow’s Annales,* 1631 edition ,p 1039, T.Adams, 1615 folio. wwwBooks.google.co.uk accessed 18.7.2016. Rastall’s *Statute* 8 Eliz.1 ca 11, 1566. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. R. Flenley *Calendar of the Register of the Queen’s Majesty’s Council* *in the Dominion and Principality of Wales and the Marches of the Same 1561-1591.* Publ. Honourable Society of Cymmodorion of London, Cymmodorian Record Series, no.8, 1916. Bodley MS No. 904.  [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. W. Rastall, ‘*A Collection in English of the Statutes then in force from the beginning of Magna Charta …until the ende of the Session of Parliament holden in the 28 yeere of the reigne of … Queen Elizabeth, Deputies of Christopher Barker, 1588.*’ London. 1588. Original volume in Archive and Special Collections, Bangor University. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. W. Rastall, *Introduction.* London He excludes those ‘*expired, or repealed or concerning private persons or some private places’* also ‘*superfluous wordes’* except *‘those preambles without which the body of the Statutes cannot be well perceived’.* ’ London. 1588. Original volume in Archive and Special Collections, Bangor University. Page numbers are irregular, some missing. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. W.Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes…* 1588. Statute 3 Hen.VIII, cap 15, 1512 [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. W.Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes…* 1588. Statute 5 Eliz. cap 6 and 7, 1563, the True Fulling and Thickening of hats and caps. Quoted in C.Heal*, Felt-Hatting in Bristol & South Gloucestershire.* ALHA Books No. X111, (Bristol, 2013), p 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. W.Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes…* 1588. Statute 3 Hen.VIII, cap 15, 1512 and many other statutes. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. W.Rastall *‘A Collection in English of the Statutes…* 1588. Statute 8 Eliz. cap 11, 1566. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. T. Fuller, *The Worthies of England*, 1661, vol.2, publ.T.Tegg, London, 1840, ed. P.A.Nuttall, London, Here-fordshire, vol.2, 116 (4to ed.) .p 68. Monmouthshire, P.A.Nuttall, vol 2, London, 1840, pp 431-433. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. E.W. Pasold, In Search of William Lee, *Textile Histor y,,* Vol.vi, The Pasold Research Fund Ltd, Edington, 1974., eds. KG Ponting & SD Chapman, pp.7-17. [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. The Ballad of the Caps, Elizabethan ballad, deduced to be by Henry Playford, 1661; reproduced as a collection in 1720 by Thomas Durfey’s ‘*Wit & Mirth or Pills to Purge Melancholy –* an *Odd Collection of Songs’* “Now First reprinted from the Final Edition, in Merrie Drollery Compleat,” Ed. J. Woodfall Ebsworth, Boston, Lincs., 1845 pp.135-138 Introduction by C.L. Day, Folklore Library Publishers Inc. New York. 1959, [p.30]. Accessed 7.5.16. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. .10-11.5 inchesin diameter after felting. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Isatis tinctoria, resida luteola, genista tinctoria, rubia tinctorum. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. Inv.No. 742a. M Flury-Lemberg, *Textile Conservation and Research,* Abegg Stiftung , Bern, 1988, p. 222. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. S. Black,’*Knitting*’, V&A. Publishing, London 2012. p. 21 [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. These are my personal notes, others may differ. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. Moorfields, Finsbury, Worship Street, Faringdon Road, Hill Street, Cheapside and Whitecross Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. John Stow ‘*Survey of London’ reprinted 1603.* Oxford 1908, e`d. C.L. Kingsford, pp 194-95 British History Online, accessed 29.6.2016. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. This was legally allowed to Coventry’s journeymen. M.Dormer-Harris *The Company and Fellowship of Cappers and Feltmakers at the City of Coventr*y, Cornwall Press,Ltd., London and Coventry, 1921. pp 5-28. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. I am grateful to Edwina Ehrman for this information. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
103. See Table 1. Nos. 238-243. Thanks to Dr. Miles Lambert, The Gallery of Costume, and Lisa Little, The Castle Museum, Norwich, for information. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
104. No. LEEAG.1949.8.196. Thanks to Natalie Raw, Curator of Costume & Textiles at Leeds Museums and Galleries. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
105. 41These figures vary in different records ‘*Knitting’* by Sandy Black , V&A Publications, 2012, p.20-21, cites 24 complete caps or fragments. The famous so-called ‘three-layered’ cap, No.1562+A1901 clearly shows how conservation has changed its shape. [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
106. Ref BM – AN1095074001 Reg.No.1856,0701,1882 (In Prehistory and Europe) Published in book of the series by Penguin Books, Ltd., London, 2014, pp. 62-70. [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
107. There are no details of another cap said to have a coin from Richard III’s reign (1482-85) [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
108. Nos TN3338, TN1506 J. Botticello, unpublished conservation report (Camberwell College of Art, 2003) and my personal notes, 1990s. No number available for coin. [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
109. E. Coxere,. *Adventures by Sea*, publ Clarendon Press, (Oxford 1945), p.74. [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
110. K. Buckland, *Costume 13,* 1979, Monmouth Cap. Pp 23-37. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
111. Ordnance, 36 Henry VIII. K. Buckland, *Costume*, 13, 1979. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
112. Captain John Smith, (1580-1631). Original leaflet: *Declaration: ‘The Inconveniences …’* (printed in London, 1622). His book ‘*History of the Virginia Settlement’*, (London) followed in 1624. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
113. K. Buckland, *The Shire Hall, Monmouth, 1571-2000*. Monmouth 2010. [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
114. Nos. 8498, 8509, [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
115. Daniel Defoe; *An Impartial History of the Life and Actions of Peter Alexowitz written by A British Officer in the Service of the Czar,* 1723, p 61. My thanks to James Snowden for finding this. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)
116. Elena Moiseyenko ‘The Emperor’s New Clothes, Peter the Great’s Wardrobe’, in  *Hermitage Magazine* 1, summer 2003, St. Petersburg, pp 43-47; also personal notes, September 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-116)
117. by Dr. Wilde (Oscar’s father), Mr. Wakeman and Mr. Petrie. [↑](#endnote-ref-117)
118. National Museum of Ireland Ref Nos 1909.66, 1909.67, Conservation report, Dora Murphy, and personal notes 2013, Janet Arnold personal correspondence, 1994. [↑](#endnote-ref-118)
119. Ibid; no. 1946-359. found Kilcommon Co. Tipperary. [↑](#endnote-ref-119)
120. Elizabethan Ballad as ref. 89. [↑](#endnote-ref-120)
121. Norwich, Book of Orders for Dutch and Walloon Strangers 1564-1643. Orders concerning Wool and Baizes, 1577. *Norwich since 1550*, Bloomsbury A&C Black, 2004, ed. C Rawcliffe, R Wilson, C.Clark p.491. NRO,NCR, 17D, Book Of Orders for the Dutch & Walloon Strangers, in I –71-9 ‘3:GS/G4>20…100-1 1571-9 fos 4v-5. As wool was measured in yards, ‘a quarter’ = quarter of a yard = 9 inches.. Dornix = woven linen cloth. Bayes = woven woolen cloth. [↑](#endnote-ref-121)
122. *Before the Mast - Life and Death aboard the Mary Rose*, The Mary Rose Trust, Portsmouth, 2005, Vol IV, ed. Julie Gardiner. K. Buckland, pp 31-37. Nos. MR 81-A3108, A0904, A8291 (lining for A0904?) S834, S836. Coifs Nos.81-A1856, A4706,A868**,** [↑](#endnote-ref-122)
123. The Regional Local Museum, Biograd, Croatia, *Gnalic Shipwreck, 1583*, No 26. Vruwe, vol.1, Biograd, 1970, pp 20-21, 65.. M.Flery Lemburg, *Textile Conservation & Research*, Abegg Stiftung, Bern, 1988, Historical Museum Inv. 742a, p328, , p. 222. [↑](#endnote-ref-123)
124. No.86-13-4066A . Delaware State Museum, Dover, Delaware, U.S.A, personal notes, visit and correspondence with Director, Charles Fithian, 2003-2007. [↑](#endnote-ref-124)
125. K.Buckland, Monmouth Caps in America, Ars Textrina 27, Winnipeg, 1997, ed. Prof. R. Stanton, pp 5-14. Neumann & Kravic. Illustrated in *Collector’s Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Revolution’*, Stackpole Books, Harrisburg,Pa., 1975, p.138. 2,300 artefacts recorded. My personal notes from visits in 1982, 1994. No number available, present location unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-125)
126. No.W-32/60/95/1 The Polish Maritime Museum,Gdansk. Correspondence and professional photographs from Professor Laurence Babits, (The George Washington Distinguished Professor of History) in October 1997, when he had first seen the material. He described this cap as thrummed or fringed but not fulled and 'natural wool and brown' (probably black and white originally)’. It was part of the collection of slops, with four short jackets, four or five pairs of breeches, stockings, and three or four felt hats. [↑](#endnote-ref-126)
127. Correspondence , 2002-3, enclosing Extract and illustrations from ‘*Parks Canada Report on Artefacts from Le Marchaut’* p 25, figures 50a,b,c,d, pp 108-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-127)
128. Personal correspondence with Prof. Laurence Babits, 2013-16. [↑](#endnote-ref-128)
129. Gift of the Arctic Centre, University of Groningen, 2006. NG –2006-110–1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14. Graves of Dutch whalers (1614-1660); 33 knitted caps were found in Spitzbergen. One was from the whaling station at Svalbard. Also S Vons-Comis, 17 century garments from Grave579, Zeeuwse Uitkijk, Spitzbergeb. *Textiles in Northern Archaeology*, eds P. Walton & J- P. Wild, NESAT 111, 1990 [↑](#endnote-ref-129)
130. No.296331c Parks Canada, Red Bay National Historic site,. Found in the cemetery of the Basque whaling station at Red Bay, Labrador. No specific grave or body known.. [↑](#endnote-ref-130)
131. ‘Pride’, H. Medwall (1462-c.1501) *Interlude of Nature.* Undated, ‘Henry V11’s reign’. London; Printed by Wm Rastall, between 1529-1535. Ed.Ann Arbor, MI ; Oxford (UK) :: Text Creation Partnership,, 2005-10 (EEBO-TCP Phase 1). accessed 21.6.16 [↑](#endnote-ref-131)
132. Rastall, Statute 4 Hen VII, cap 9, 1488 [↑](#endnote-ref-132)
133. Inventories of Worcester tradesmen, 1545-1614 Vol V *Miscellany 11,* (Worcester History Society, 1967) ed. A.D.Dyer. pp 1-67. London, PRO SC2 Portfolio 2210, no.16. The Goods of Andrew Coxon. [↑](#endnote-ref-133)
134. Inventories of Worcester tradesmen, 1545-1614 Worcester History Society. Vol V, ed. A.D.Dyer. The goods of Roger Yelfe. . [↑](#endnote-ref-134)
135. Williams & Tweedy, Solicitors, (firm now defunct, founders’ initials unknown), 795, D.10, Vol,2, (29 September, 15 Hen V111). Uncatalogued Monmouthshire papers, now probably in Ebbw Vale, cited in K. Buckland, ‘The Monmouth Cap’, *Costume*, Vol:13, 1979. p 25; [↑](#endnote-ref-135)
136. K. R. Andrews, *The Last Voyage of Drake and Hawkins*, Hakluyt Society, Cambridge University Press, 1972. [↑](#endnote-ref-136)
137. Monmouth Borough Archives, vol 6, Hundred Court Records, 1545-1550. Quoted by R.Waugh  *Guide to Monmouth,* 1879. Self published. No page numbering.. [↑](#endnote-ref-137)
138. D. Matthews *The Social Structure in Caroline England*, Oxford, 1948, p.101. There are comparative prices in K. Buckland, ‘The Monmouth Cap’, *Costume*, Vol: XIII, 1979. pp 23-37. [↑](#endnote-ref-138)
139. An Inventory of ye estate of Cap’n Jno Lee dec’s. March 1673-74, Westmoreland County, Virginia, Records, Deed Patents and Accs., Deposition, &c. p.180. [↑](#endnote-ref-139)
140. C. Richmond*, Fastolf’s Will*, CUP, Cambridge, 1996, costume listed on p 17. [↑](#endnote-ref-140)
141. S.M.Levey, Bess of Hardwick’s Account Book, *Costume* 34, London, 2000, p.16. (2 knete capys, 6d. each,’ 1549.) [↑](#endnote-ref-141)
142. *History of British Costume* The Library of Entertaining Knowledge, London, 1834, (Said to be written by J.R. Planch∕é) p.229. They were probably made of cloth. [↑](#endnote-ref-142)
143. Philip Stubbes, (c.1555-c.1610) *Anatomie of Abuses*, c.1583, (Throughout) ‘The lengthy description which Stubbes gives of the extravagances of Elizabethan fashion is a unique storehouse of facts relating to late sixteenth century costume.’ Cambridge History X14, vol. 6, eds. A Ward & A Waller, 2000. www.bartleby .com/216/1411html. (Accessed 17.7.16). [↑](#endnote-ref-143)
144. Thomas Dekker, The Honest Whore, Part 2. Unnumbered pages.

     Publ. London: Printed by Elizabeth All-de, for Nathaniel Butter, 1630. www. Early English Books on line. Accessed 17.7.16. [↑](#endnote-ref-144)
145. ***Hamlet*, Act I, Sc.3..** [↑](#endnote-ref-145)
146. *Love’s Labours Lost*, Act V Sc 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-146)
147. *Coriolanus* 11.1.281; Act 1V, sc..6, 133. [↑](#endnote-ref-147)
148. about 1996-7 [↑](#endnote-ref-148)
149. These are lopsided and stiffened to support regimental badges. Brochure and personal notes from visit 2008. www.Beatex. [↑](#endnote-ref-149)
150. www. Le Bonnet Rouge, accessed 2013, 2015, .and increasingly active according to agricultural press, 2016.

     . [↑](#endnote-ref-150)