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**“The First Collapsible Top Hat”**

The first official invention of what we now refer to as a collapsible top hat in England was in 1812, by the hatter:

**Thomas Francis Dollman, of 8 St James Street, London.**

Dollman was awarded a Patent for: "An elastic round hat, that may be made of beaver, silk, or other materials"

Whilst Gibus is the more famous maker of collapsible top hats, there were many other makers and designs of collapsible hats before Gibus perfected his. Dollman’s Elastic Round Hat eventually had competition even on the home front (not just overseas from Gibus) with designs including the Circumfolding Top Hat and the Soft Folding Hat.

Dollman eventually adopted the popular name “Opera Hat” when referencing his design as “Patent Elastic Opera Hats” even though the Patent was initially designed to fold/collapse for “Travelling” (as opposed to putting under a seat at the Opera) as such a Collapsible Top Hat was not exclusively for Evening Wear, nor the Opera.

So a Collapsible Hat was and may still be used for daywear with morning dress. And is especially useful for gentleman even to this day who may have restricted luggage allowances when travelling.

For more information please contact:

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