



# CHESTER GREENWOOD



Born: 4<sup>th</sup> December 1858

Died: 5<sup>th</sup> July 1937

Famous for inventing earmuffs.

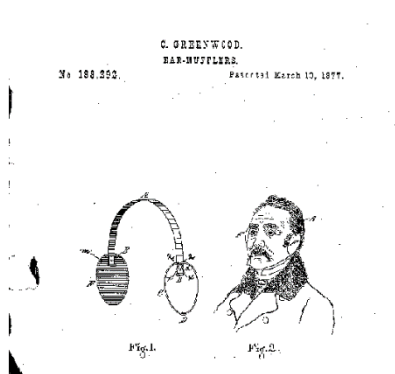
## EARLY LIFE

Chester was born in Maine on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1858. He was one of six children and lived at his families farm in Maine where he worked hard selling eggs door to door. As a keen inventor, Chester wanted to find some way of helping out people that felt the cold of the winters, where temperatures could fall as low as -46°C.

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENT

In 1873, at the age of 15, he wanted to come up with a way of keeping his ears warm without having to tie a bulky, itchy scarf around them. After a particularly brutal day of ice skating, he had shaped two pieces of thin, flexible wire into ear shaped loops. He asked his Grandmother to sew beaver fur (which was used for coats, gloves and feet coverings) onto the loops. This first version was a good starting point and he realised he could make improvements by adding a steel band to connect the two loops and hold them in place. He innovated this design by putting black velvet on the inside to make them more comfortable on the ears.

## GREENWOOD'S COMPANY



Greenwood established Greenwood's Ear Protector Factory in Farmington and began to mass produce "Greenwood's Champion Ear Protectors". The company supplied earmuffs to American soldiers during World War 2 and Farmington became known as the Earmuff capital of the world.

Greenwood continued to make his product better and added hinges and size adjusters so the earmuffs could be folded and carried in pockets. He was awarded a patent for this idea on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1877 when he was just 18 years old.

## LATER LIFE

Greenwood was also credited for inventing the steel-toothed rake, wide bottomed kettle, decoy mouse trap and a shock absorber design that is still used in the landing gear of aeroplanes today.

He passed away at the age of 79. Every year, on December 21<sup>st</sup>, a parade is held in Maine to honour his achievements.



FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M26xQbYogI0>

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EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. In which country was Chester born?
2. What job did Chester do before his invention?
3. Why did Chester invent earmuffs?
4. Which important Americans did the company supply earmuffs to?
5. How old was Chester when his design was patented?