

The Latest In Tonsorial Stylings

By George Underhill

I got my hair cut a few weeks ago, and the person cutting it did a pretty good job. The barber can't make me look like Brad Pitt because appearance-wise she doesn't have much to work with. Even so, it's possible to make me look worse if given a bad haircut. The worst hair cut I ever received was in Orleans, Massachusetts, while on holidays. There was a single barber in the shop and no customers, but he asked me to wait while he "Finished picking the wood ticks off my dog." You might well say I should have walked out right then, and you would be correct. I can't imagine what made me stay. I received a haircut that looked like I had just joined the marines. Shaved off on the sides and real short on the top. I paid him, too. What the heck was wrong with me?

I miss the old timey barber shops. When I was a kid, all the male relatives of my family went to Bernie, a slim Italian man with a pencil thin moustache. There was a long mirror behind the chair, and in front of it, on shelves, was a marvelous collection of oils, balms, salves and unguents in a rainbow of colours. I remember Vitalis, which stung a little when rubbed into the scalp because it was almost entirely alcohol. I remember Wildroot Cream Oil, too, which had a radio jingle:

Get Wildroot Cream Oil Charlie,
It keeps your hair in trim.
Get Wildroot Cream Oil Charlie,
It's made with soothing Lan-O-lin.

and...

Brylcream, a little dab'll do ya
Brylcream, you'll look so debonair,
Brylcream the girls will pursue ya,
Put a little Brylcream in your hair.

I never got any of this stuff on my hair. I was a kid and only men who needed to attract women dared put this stuff on their hair. Bernie came to the house to cut my grandfather's hair, and I think it was there where my mother conveyed the instructions on how my hair should be cut when I went into his shop. She wanted me to have a 'whiffle', that's what it was called. Today, I believe, it's called a brush cut

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