

# JAEGER'S BATTALION ROGERS' RANGERS

## *A GUIDE FOR PROPER CLOTHING AND GEAR IN THE 1750s*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

If clothing makes the man, then clothing doubly makes – or breaks – the Ranger. In recreating the persona of a Ranger, historical correctness is essential. Throw out all of the old stereotypes about how you feel your clothing should look. Wearing what is correct, not just what looks good to you, is the only way to portray a proper Ranger. Remember that you are portraying a historical character, and not just inventing one of your own.

It would be wise to choose a specific area of New England for your 18<sup>th</sup>-century home. Choose a prewar occupation (farmer, hunter, etc), and then research what clothing and gear that person typically would own. This will help to assure historical accuracy, and such research will prevent members of an early Ranger company from all looking alike.

The most important thing to remember is, keep your clothing and gear simple! Every item the Ranger wore or carried had a specific purpose. Everything was selected out of necessity. Early Ranger units maintained a blend of woodsman, Indian, and military appearance. Keeping your gear to a minimum and making it streamlined for use in the woods is essential. Every detail is important.

Moreover, it is the “common” impression that we encourage, not the unique. Too many reenactors try to stretch their impressions to encompass some piece of clothing or gear that they think looks “cool.” Your guideline should be, “If I walked down a Ranger Company street on Rogers’ Island, would I look out of place?”

It should be noted that Jaeger’s is a uniformed Ranger unit. However, the best way to look at it is, we are a non-uniform, uniformed unit. That is to say, variety within Companies and between Rangers, leads to a more accurate portrayal. Supply systems broke down, clothing wore out or was lost, battlefield pickups were available, and your intent was to survive the elements, not look like a pretty Regular.

### **FACIAL HAIR**

Although it’s not clothing or equipment, hair is something that needs mentioned. The eighteenth century English/Colonial military was clean-shaven. Beards and mustaches were not commonly worn. Rangers and other soldiers on campaign may have little time for shaving, so a few days growth of whiskers would be authentic. Although Jaeger’s does not have a strict policy on facial hair, the less of it, the more accurate the portrayal.

### **PERIOD EYEWEAR**

This is a very important item which should be near the top of your list as you begin to acquire your 18<sup>th</sup> century outfit. You may have the most authentic clothing and gear, but your efforts are wasted by wearing modern eyewear. Spectacle frames are one of the first items noticed by others.

Since most people today may have vision problems, there are two approaches to wearing eyewear for reenacting:

- Wear contact lenses, since they would be most correct as far as appearance goes. Eyewear was rarely worn in public during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, not all can do this.
- Purchase a set of period correct eyeglass frames and have your prescription lenses fitted to them. Check with you eye doctor before purchasing the frames. He can help you select the frames that will best fit your prescription.
- *A word of caution* – Do your research to determine which styles are correct for the 1750's or earlier. Too many F&I reenactors wear spectacles which date from the 1770s and later.

### **HUNTING SHIRT (Overshirt, Wagoner's smock)**

A hunting shirt was a large, pullover shirt which protected any "small clothes" worn underneath it. Hunting shirts were long, large, and worn about knee length or slightly shorter.

- They were made of linen, primarily, as it was most common. However cotton, wool, canvas, fustian, and linsey-woolsey are acceptable.
- The hunting shirt did not typically have a cape or much decoration for the French and Indian War period. Revolutionary War fringed and caped rifleman's frocks are not appropriate for our unit.
- Browns, greens, grays, and drab were very common colors and are good for woods wear and concealment.
- Checked and striped fabrics were also very popular but they should be woven and not printed. Woven patterns will appear identical on both sides of the material.
- *Short fringe* is acceptable along the bottoms and the collar. For safety reasons, don't wear fringe on the cuffs. A campfire or musket pan flash can easily burn the fringe.

### **COMMON SHIRT**

This was the common military/civilian man's everyday shirt. The main difference between the construction of the common shirt and the hunting shirt is the length. The common shirt was shorter, falling about half-way down the thigh. Acceptable fabrics and colors are the same as listed for the hunting shirt. The most widely available colors of the time period were white, black and white check, and navy blue and white check.

### **WESKIT / WAISTCOAT**

The waistcoat was considered a "must" for wear if one did not have a jacket or coat on. Waistcoats were fashionable and daily wear for men of this time. Both sleeveless and sleeved waistcoats are correct.

- The style of the waistcoat during the French and Indian War period was long, thigh length, and straight cut. They could have collars or not.
- The materials used were wool, linen, fustian, and sometimes cotton. Wool was the most common material used.
- The most common colors were brown, green, grey, and natural or light brown. There are references to reds, blues and mustard yellow. Stripes and embroidered also existed. White although a period color was not a common color for a waistcoat.

- The buttons would be made of white metal, brass, bone or wood.

## **KNEE BREECHES**

Knee Breeches - Fly Front (French Style) are the most common but drop-front are also correct. Trousers also are appropriate, but not common. Sailor slops may also be worn over breeches, for fatigue work or other dirty work, as some Rangers were seamen recruited from the docks of Boston and other port towns.

Many Rangers probably wore Breechcloths and leggings of Native style. Black, grey, greens, blues, browns, and natural linen were the most common colors for breechcloths, but orange (faded madder red), reds, and striped also existed.

## **LEGGINGS / GAITERS**

Both leggings and gaiters were common during the French and Indian War. One need not wear either as period socks are just as correct. However, it is well-documented that both Rangers and Regulars generally always wore them in the field.

### **LEGGINGS:**

- Side-seam leggings are the most common style.
- A note of caution is in order pertaining to center-seam leggings. At the time of this writing, the Battalion does not have conclusive evidence that center-seam leggings were worn during the 1750s.
- Leggings were made of wool, deer hide, canvas and linen. Wool was the most common material.
- Leather leggings sometimes were dyed.
- Leggings were tied at the knee with finger woven leg ties, leather Strapping or garter belts and buckles. They were attached to a belt by leather straps or to knee buttons by a buttonhole.
- Greens, browns, blue, red, and black were the most common wool colors. A contrasting wool tape trim may be added to the edges.
- The dimensions of the wool leg coverings go from the ankle to about a hands width above the knee. These leggings had a side seem sewn with a double flap of excess material about three fingers in width

### **GAITERS:**

- There is some doubt that Rangers would have had gaiters. These were items issued to the Regulars. Wool leggings are much easier to construct, anyway.
- Gaiters were made of leather or canvas.
- Military gaiters were the twenty button type and were made of Linen Canvas.
- Heavy fabric gaiters were issued to British troops during the F&I period.
- Gaiters may be painted or dyed. Regulars wore brown-painted or black-painted gaiters for field use. White gaiters were worn for dress occasions.

## **UNIFORM COAT**

The uniform coat was not used until early 1758. The exact style is not fully documented, as there are no known coats in existence in either public or private collections. The current

Battalion pattern was developed over a long period of time, and has gone through several revisions. Input from well-known Ranger historians and Ranger reenactors was used in its development. Those contributors included: Ron Embleton, Gerry Embleton, Gary Zaboly, John Cuneo, George A. Bray III, Harrison Bird, Frederick Chapman, John Jaeger, Tim J. Todish, Tana Shoger, Jerry Shoger, Jerry Olson, Mary Olson, and Tim Carlson.

**Note:** The Ranger coat is referred to as a *uniform coat*. Rogers' Rangers were never designated as a regiment, so the terms *regimental* or *regimental coat* are incorrect.

- If you decide to make your own uniform coat, contact the Battalion Patternmaster for the correct pattern.
- The uniform coat is double breasted, short-waisted with slash or straight cuffs. The pockets may be functional or not. Some period journal excerpts mention that the pockets were functional. The uniform coat can be collared or collarless as documentation is sketchy, but it appears most common was collarless.
- Buttons would be of plain white metal (pewter). Flat and domed buttons are acceptable. **Reverse "R" buttons are not documentable and are thus, unacceptable.** Hooks and eyes are period correct for the upper part of the coat closure.
- The uniform coat is green in color.
- The uniform coat is wool, with the facings of serge. Facings and cuffs may be slightly darker green than the body of the coat. Period coats were lined in lightweight wool.

**NOTE:** Some reenactors use lighter weight materials for summer-use uniform coats, including linen linings. Green wool can be used for the parts of tails and pleats that show, then linen is used to line the rest of the coat. Although not authentic, this lends itself to more comfort in summer events.

- Sutlers that have the Battalion pattern and follow it are: Druid's Oak (*Neil Redmon*) and Barkertown Sutlers (*Larry and Missey Clark*).

**Note:** Any for profit use of the Battalion Pattern without the expressed permission of Jaeger's Battalion is prohibited. Permission for a tailor outside of the Battalion to use the official pattern must be granted through the Battalion Adjutant.

## **COAT (Civilian)**

Due to lack of supply, wear, or other need, Rangers may have been dependent on civilian type coats. Coats of wool, linen, fustian, canvas, or cotton are correct. Common colors are brown, dark blue, tan, black, green, red, madder, and rust.

- Double Breasted or single-breasted personal coats. Period correct 1750's design. May be thigh length or short waisted.
- SLEEVED WAISTCOAT ... This is the most commonly seen garment for men of the mid 18th century. The sleeved waistcoat was the choice of "jacket" of the working class. This can be worn alone or under a coat. It is fully lined and has functional pockets. Wool, linen, fustian, or cotton are acceptable.
- MATCHCOAT ... The matchcoat is very simple but effective outer garment that is nothing more than a blanket that is fastened around the body.
- WINTER COAT ... A wrap around coat made with the cut of the French style Justaucorps, having large boot cuffs. These cuffs often had wool covered buttons on them. This coat extended to the knee or below. Eastern-style capotes (No "candy-

striped” capotes), dufflecoat, sleeved waistcoat or blanket as a matchcoat are acceptable and appropriate.

## **FOOTWEAR**

Correct styles include Eastern woodland center-seam and pucker toe moccasins, shoepacks or leather shoes (with or without buckles). Shoes can also be tied, instead of buckled.

An early style Canadian boot is also acceptable, that being center seamed and from 12 inches to 14 inches high. They would be wrapped with leather or linen.

The moccasins are to be center seamed and of period design. Little or no decoration other than colorful wool inserts. Moose or deer were commonly used leathers. Moccasins wear out quickly. Durable leather that breathes and dries quickly (skived or braintanned) is the most practical.

## **HEADGEAR**

A variety of headgear is correct; round hats, jockey caps, Scots bonnets, tricorns, milled caps, workmen’s caps, Monmouth caps, flopped hats, leather hats and furred hats. The hats were found in many 18<sup>th</sup> century colors such as black, green, blue, and brown. Decoration, to suit individual taste should be minimal.

A ranger was likely to wear any type of hat that he could get his hands on especially if it struck his fancy. The favored hat of the rangers was the Scots Bonnet.

## **SCOTS BONNET**

The most popular hat among the rangers was the Scots Bonnet. They typically were hand-knit and heavily felted. Some may have been made of coat-weight wool. They were supplied by private contractors or made by individuals. The official color for a military bonnet was blue – the traditional warriors’ color. The Highlanders’ bonnets were blue with a plain (not diced) red band along the bottom. Various shades of blue are appropriate. Green, brown, gray, black, and tan are also acceptable colors. The bonnet should not have a pom attached.

A good example of a period bonnet is found in the publication Engravings by Hogarth (print 372 – 1748/1749).

***NOTE:** Bonnet pins with the back-to-back “Rs” are not appropriate.*

## **ROUND HAT**

Round hats were also referred to as “cut hats”. They were usually made from a cut-down tricorne with a short 2-inch to 2-1/2 inch brim. Black was the most common color.

## **KNITTED CAPS**

A milled cap is a knitted cap without tassel which folds down upon itself. Common colors were red, scarlet (dark red), as well as brown, blue, gray and even white.

Monmouth caps date back to the 1600’s. They are a tight-fitting knit cap, named for Monmouth, England, from where they originated. A properly made Monmouth cap will have a top-knot and a peg-loop on the back.

## **TRICORN**

Tricorns should be of the correct French and Indian War style. (This is different from the Revolutionary War period style). The hat should be cocked in the form of an equilateral triangle, when looking down on it from the top. Black, brown, and gray are common colors.

## **NATIVE ELEMENTS OF RANGER DRESS**

It has been concluded within the past several years, that Ranger dress was likely very different from season to season on the shores of Lake George, and that to some extent direct contact with allied natives also influenced Ranger dress. It is perfectly reasonable to conclude that during hot summer season, rangers would adapt their dress to conditions, and wear only longshirts, waistcoats, breechcloths and moccasins. Because of close working relationships with New England tribes and Mohawks, some exchange of culture and dress occurred. It is the opinion of respected members of the Battalion that a reasonable amount of native appearance is appropriate, especially in the hot summer months. This would include breechcloths, moccasins, leggings with beaded or quilled touches, if carefully researched, and not overdone. This also means beaded shoulder straps on pouches, decorated sashes, or leg ties. It has been discussed that we as rangers do not wish to look identical, as if issued Regulars' clothing and equipment, and that as irregulars, individuality is desired. On the other hand, it is not acceptable to blur impressions with persons of another era to accommodate individuality.

Not only was Native clothing adopted by the Rangers, but the habit of "painting" when going on party is also documented.

## **KNAPSACK/HAVERSACK/SNAPSACK/TUMPLINES:**

People of the 18th century used several types of packs for carrying their possessions. The military used Knapsacks and Haversacks while civilians used the same as well as the snapsack. These are the most common forms and they are explained in the following sections:

### **KNAPSACK:**

This pack started out as a haversack and has cloth or leather straps sewn on in order to wear the pack centered on the back. Some have fully adjustable leather straps.

- One variation was two haversacks sewn bottom to bottom. This is thought to be of Scottish origin.
- Converted haversack with shoulder straps.
- Finished size is about 15" X 15"
- Documentation: "We immediately laid down our packs and prepared for battle." P. 84 Rogers Journal

### **SNAP SACK:**

A snap sack is a tubular bag that ties off at one end. It was used by some European troops during the 1600s and 1700s.

- Its simple design was used by both the British and French Armies well into the 18th Century. The snapsack is a simple canvas tube that is secured at each end and carried by the use of stout 3" leather Tumpline Strap, often referred to in journals as a Country Pack.
- The finished size is about 18" X 30."

## **HAVERSACK:**

The haversack is a shoulder slung bag that carried rations for His Majesty's Troops. Cloth strap is standard. Regulars were issued haversacks, Rangers were not. It may be reasonably deduced that Rangers made haversacks or brought them from home, as their practicality had long been proven.

- The haversack was hung over the shoulder by a Canvas or linen strap.
- Finished size is about 17" high, 16-1/2" wide.
- Linen was the most common material but canvas and wool are also acceptable.
- Two or three closure buttons of white metal, pewter, bone, or antler is common.
- The haversack can be decorated or left plain.
- Documentation: "Where the men march they are to put their provisions in Haversacks and roll them up in blankets like the Rangers" - R.E. Mulligan 1758.
- *French Haversack* was a sack approximately 35 inches by 22 inches with leather strap attached to both sides of the bag allowing the top to become a flap and naturally draping over the bag. The strap was buckled across the front and the worn under the left arm

To properly waterproof your knapsack, snap sack or haversack using beeswax, tar, milk paint, or an oil-based paint. Watered-down latex paint serves very well as a modern coating that simulates the original. Adding colored pigments to the waterproofing medium was common.

***A word of caution*** – use of boiled linseed oil is not a safe waterproofing method, as it is very combustible.

## **TUMPLINE:**

The tumpline is a woven or leather strap used to carry a blanket roll. Their use was adopted from Native Americans, who had been using them as burden straps for centuries. Personal items and clothing were rolled up inside the blanket. The tumpline was then tied around the blanket roll and can be worn around both shoulders, over one shoulder, or hanging diagonally across the back. There is much documentation of Rangers and even Regulars using tumplines.

## **HUNTING BAG (Pouch)**

The typical pouch for the French & Indian War period was relatively small and was made from available leather. The hunting pouch was a single or double pocketed small bag averaging about eight inches in width and about the same depth. Variations did exist.

- Worn high under the arm (streamlined). Do not hang items as powder measures from the straps, unless they can be tucked inside the bag.
- The powder horn was worn on a separate strap.
- Flaps or closures of period correct design. That being: Rounded, Squared, Beaver Tailed, Turkey Tailed, Slanted, or pointed. Can be closed with a white metal, pewter, or antler button or be tied shut.
- Bags were made of Leather, Canvas, Linen, Wool, or any other period correct material.
- The bags can be plain or decorated by beads, paint, porcupine quills, wool, and scribed.
- Carrying straps of Leather, Finger woven wool, Canvas, Rope, or Linen.
- An essential article of this period for carrying items to aid in the firing of the firelock.

Tools that might be found in the shooting bag;

- A ramrod puller for stuck ramrods.
- A turnscrew ( period correct screwdriver) for fusils and King's arm.
- Spring Vise
- A whisk and vent pick for cleaning pan and touchhole of Musket.
- Small brushes
- Small cloth for wiping the frizzen during battle
- A worm for cleaning barrel
- Patches or tow for cleaning a firelock
- Small tins for holding patch grease
- A knapping tool (small tapping hammer) for edging gunflints. A small round stone will suffice.
- Extra flints.
  - British Gunflints were dark blue or black.
  - French Gunflints are the honey amber
- A flint striker, charcloth and flints to start fires.

## **POWDERHORN**

Powder horns are a personal item and were very much needed and used by all Rangers.

- The typical F&I horns were large, approximately 14 inches to 17 inches along the outside curve.
- Having "carved" horns showing correct period drawings or inscriptions is good, but not always necessary for your portrayal. Incidentally, early horns were "carved" or "engraved". "Scrimshaw" is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century term.
- Wear powder horns that you use and let them get worn and discolored.
- Don't use American Buffalo horn, use only Bullock horn.
- Although it is doubtful that priming horns were carried by Rangers, they are permitted and should be carried in your shooting pouch.
- Horns often had a twist. Like the firelocks, there are different architectures, or designs, of horns made in different geographical regions. Research the designs whenever possible. Several excellent books on horns are available.
- Wear high under the arm (streamlined).

## **FIRELOCKS**

One should make an effort to get a weapon that is unique and correct for the Rangers fighting in during the French and Indian War. It is best to keep in mind what was available to the Rangers on the New England frontier in the prior to 1754. They had little access to state of the art British military arms. Although the British government had at times shipped weapons over for Provincial forces, they tended to send older, out-dated weapons which were serviceable but not desirable for the British Regulars.

Most colonists used weapons that were 30-50 years old or even older. So don't think about weapons dated during the French and Indian War, you need to think about weapons from 1690-1750. With that in mind, however, it should be noted that the French and Indian War reenacting community, including Jaeger's Battalion does accept the 2<sup>nd</sup> Model Brown Bess for their members. For many years, this was the only commercially-made British musket that was available to reenactors.

Since Ranger recruits often supplied their own arms any flintlock from the 1750s or earlier, of French, English, Dutch, or other Colonial origin is correct. Firelocks as they were called were primarily smoothbores.

- The Northwest trade gun is a later period and would not be correct for the French and Indian War period.
- The First Model Brown Bess (Long Land Service Musket) is the correct British military model for the F&I period. However, because of rarity and expense of a good First Model reproduction, the Second Model Bess (Short Land Service musket) is acceptable. There are conversion kits and instructions to convert a Second Model Brown Bess to a close facsimile of the First Model.
- Incidentally, the term “Brown Bess” is a later term that was not used in the French and Indian War time period. The musket was referred to as a “Long Land musket”, or simply and the “King’s Arm”.
- A sling was common for woodland warfare.
- Rifled barrels were in existence and were issued to the British troops in limited supply. The documentation of Rangers carrying rifled muskets is vague at best.
- All firelocks must have proper safety devices; flash guards and hammer stalls must be installed. (Note: The term *frizzen* is a twentieth century term. It is properly called the hammer or steel. On a flintlock the cock holds the flint and it strikes the hammer or steel to make a spark. The period correct name for hammer stalls is *hammer caps*.)
- When planning to purchase a firelock, consult with your Company commander or the Battalion Armorer.

**Note concerning the following edged weapons: All knives, axes, tomahawks, and bayonets must be carried in protective sheaths or scabbards.**

### **KNIVES**

Knives come in all shapes and sizes to suit the whims of the owner. It was common to carry several knives.

- Most knives of this period and used by the Rangers were large scalping or hunting blades with an assortment of handles. The handles could be Bone, Wood, or Antler.
- They can be homemade from old files, saw blades, or any other hard metal (high carbon steel). Knife guards were uncommon. All knives should be hand-forged.
- The butcher-style blade was a typical design.
- Most bases of blades were ground smooth to avoid injury.
- Trade knives of French, Dutch, or English origin were common also.
- Bowie-style knives are *not* appropriate. Those are from a much later period blade.
- Sheaths were an assortment of materials and could be plain or decorated as bags were.
- Folding knives were also very common. They were used for everyday camp chores and cooking. They can be easily carried in shooting bags, waistcoat pockets, or breeches pockets.

### **TOMAHAWK OR BELT AXE**

Short handled hatchet, hand axe or tomahawk of British, French, or Dutch manufacture. No pipe tomahawks.

## **BAYONET**

Not all of the Rangers carried bayonets. The bayonet is made for a military type of musket. For the Rangers carrying a King's arm, the bayonet would be appropriate and might have been part of the issue. If the Ranger is carrying his own personal firelock (fusil, early trade gun or fowler) he more than likely would not carry a bayonet. The plug bayonet was obsolete for military arms, but it was still used for fusils, early trade guns or fowlers. If you purchase the King's arm, you will want to purchase the bayonet from the same vendor so it fits your musket. There is a difference in scabbards between F&I and Revolutionary War periods.

## **FROG & BELT**

The frog is worn on the belt. It carries the Tomahawk or axe and also has an attachment to carry Bayonet scabbard. Colors of the period are Russet being the most common, buff, white, and black. Can be British, French, or homemade style. Remember that the tomahawk or axe head must be sheathed in leather enclosure with ties or button snap. The frog was not used by all early Rangers.

## **CATRIDGE BOX/BELLY BOX/CATRIDGE POUCH**

Cartridge boxes can be in many styles but two main ones are the "belly box" and the "over the shoulder" type.

- Always wear your powder horn and hunting pouch Extra cartridges can be carried in the shooting bag.
- Cartridge boxes and belly boxes were made of leather (both brown and black) and held a wooden block holding anywhere from 9 to 32 holes for cartridges. A cartridge pouch is a belt pouch, similar to a plain sporran, which does not have a wooden block. The cartridges are stored loosely in the pouch type. The cartridge pouch is considered by some Ranger historians to be the most authentic type of cartridge container.
- **Note:** A few historic sites require that cartridges be carried in a container that uses a wooden cartridge block. So, if you generally carry a plain belt pouch, you should also have a box with wooden block for those special sites that require them. Check with your Company commander for site-specific rules.
- Boxes may be plain, scribed, have an insignia of GR II on the flap, or any other period correct decoration. Cartridge box straps may be of leather or woven strapping.

## **BLANKETS**

Period correct homemade blankets were small as looms were not bigger than 36 inches so two blankets were usually sewed together to make coverlet.

- Can be of any period correct material.
- Trade blankets were larger and wool.
- Earth-tone colors for the period are preferable such as cream, tan, brown; Lachine striped (reds, greens, white). Grey and wine colored also period correct but not as common. The natural (Cream) colored blanket with a blue stripe is generally considered a very early design. "Candy striped" blankets are not correct to the period.
- Blankets containing 100 percent wool are preferred, but do not accept blankets that contain less than 85 percent wool.
- The Whitney multi colored and point blanket is a later period. The Whitney logo tag is also a 19th century addition so if you don't remove it, at least hide it.

## **CANTEEN**

A canteen is a must. Every Ranger in the Battalion must carry a canteen in order to take the field, or for any Company or Battalion formation. There are many styles to choose from. A Ranger from the first few years of the F&I could carry a kidney-shaped copper canteen; a round, wooden style; one made of leather; or a hollowed-out gourd. Military styles were made of tin and were kidney-shaped. Canteens of pottery and leather-covered glass are also period correct, but are much more fragile.

- Copper canteens tend not to be lined (tinned). And even if they are, you can not count on one hundred percent coverage. If you use anything but water in them, you can get sick.
- Tin canteens suffer a similar problem since many of them are made in third world countries, the tin may leach lead. Also both the tin and copper are usually soldered. The solder can have a high lead content. The best bet is to purchase directly from a tinsmith or coppersmith of known reputation. In that way, you are sure of a safe canteen.
- Since there can be hidden problems with either tin or copper, the modern ranger can choose a canteen made of stainless steel. While the stainless steel is not period correct, it offers you the safety of having not to worry about any contamination being caused by what you put into the canteen. Use steel wool on stainless steel canteens to remove the shine. You can cover the canteen with wool.
- Since most canteens come with a wood stopper, a cork stopper can be substituted for a better fit and stop leaking from the spot.
- Wood stave canteens are proper for the F&I. Many people use them but they have a draw-back of leaking if wood dries out. Coating the inside with melted beeswax or brewer's pitch helps prevent leakage.
- Leather and gourd canteens are acceptable but they also have their limitations.
- A cloth cover (wool) is highly suggested for your metal canteen. Any color wool will do, but stick to earth tones; brown, green, blue or gray. Also, whether you use a cord or strap, if it's white, it'll stick out like a sore thumb. You can "tea dye" it to bring down the brightness.

## **TENT**

Rangers seldom used tents. On campaign or when "on party" they built lean-to's, slept on leaves and pine boughs, or on the ground under the trees and stars. On Rogers Island at Fort Edward they built huts. We have evidence of this from paintings by Thomas Davies. However, there may have been times when they were forced to use tents since they were part of the British military and had to follow orders.

Today, we have very little choice since most of our events take part at well groomed historical sites. Tents seem to fit the orders of the British command. Wedge or lean-to structures are acceptable. Baker style tents are from a later period and not acceptable.

### **Military Wedge Tents**

- We do use Military wedges though and they can be obtained from quality companies.
- Wedge tents for the F&I War period generally were larger than during the Revolutionary War. The 1750's British 7'x9'x6' is correct for usage by privates as is the 6'x7'x6'. The 1751 French bell Tent is also period correct and can be used. The guideline is – the smaller the better.

- Tents for officers are larger and the 8'x9'x6'6" is ideal but larger Marquees and Walls are acceptable also.
- Most of us have wedges within the above specifications but we also have some larger as family size dictates. Some families use a larger tent. However, if children are old enough, having several smaller tents instead of one large one, lends itself to better camp appearance. If you have an oversize wedge, you may be ordered to set up in a special location away from the Battalion, or in a special spot within the Battalion area. Site-specific or event-specific rules must be followed. Be cooperative and polite with the event quartermaster. Remember, you represent Jaeger's Battalion. If you have problems, refer them to the Battalion Field Commander, the Battalion Commander, Adjutant, or your Company Commander.
- Sod cloths and ground cloths, although not period correct, are permissible.
- Always check with the Battalion officers or NCO's before putting up your tent. We do want to follow proper castrementation (camp organization), and this may prevent having to tear down and move your tent.

### **TRUNKS OR WOODEN CAMP BOXES**

Rangers would have carried everything they needed on their backs. They commonly would not have had trunks or camp boxes. However, today we carry more items than an eighteenth century Ranger. We often need a place to store extra clothing and to keep 21<sup>st</sup> century items out of sight. Trunks or camp boxes should be kept to a minimum size and kept inside your tent. Boxes should be made of wood and appear as of 18<sup>th</sup> century construction.

### **CAMP FURNITURE**

- In order to keep an 18<sup>th</sup> century camp appearance there should be no camp furniture such as tables, chairs, and stools, along the tent rows during public hours at events. It is unmilitary and incorrect. After public hours, these regulations may be relaxed, so that we can enjoy a social evening.
- All furniture in the tent rows should be stored inside tents and out of the public view during public hours.
- Musket rests and lantern stands should not be posted outside tents. It is not military.
- Chairs, tables, lantern stands, and musket rests are acceptable in Company kitchen areas during public hours. It should be noted that Rangers would have had a minimum of items.

### **UTENSILS**

- Wooden Trenchers, Bowls, Plates, and Porringers were most common but these also existed in Tin and Pewter.
- Two and three pronged forks are period correct as well as spoons made of Horn, Wood, Shell, Pewter, Tin, and Bone.
- Period correct knives of all shapes and sizes but the spoon was the most common utensil as lots of soups were made.
- Lead was period correct but is not safe.
- Mugs and cups were made of copper, redware, wood, tin, and pewter. Also, wooden noggins for drinking cups were made from tree burls.

- A lot of homemade primitive eating utensils are most correct. These were simple folk who made a lot of their own stuff.

## **ICE SKATES**

During the winter, it was customary, in Europe and North America, for the armies to suspend hostilities and go into quarters. On the North American continent, during the French and Indian War (1754 - 1763), the Native Americans and colonials would carry-on the hostilities to a limited extent during the winter months. Fighting in the snowy cold wilderness took special clothing, skills and equipment. The British Rangers under Captain Robert Rogers equipped themselves with ice skates and use them whenever possible. They would use the ice skates to cover more distance in a shorter period of time expending less energy.

The ice skates of the 18<sup>th</sup> century had not changed in appearance for over 100 years. The blade was made of iron or a low grade of steel. The blade was curled up in front. The skate blades would either have a grooved or flat bottom. The blade was attached to a wooden platform which upon the foot of the skater was held by leather straps. The platform is made of maple, ash, pine or other wood of the period. It can be left natural or painted with color of the period. The buckles which are found on the leather straps are d-shaped forged iron. However, brass buckles would be also correct.

There are two styles of skates. One was used for shoes and one for moccasins. The shoe type has screw in the heel sticking up in the heel area which helps fasten the skate to the skaters shoes. The other type has a heel cup to help hold the foot stable on the platform. There are no protrusions from the platform since these are used with moccasins. Since the Rangers used winter moccasins and shoepacks, the smooth platform skate was probably used.

There are several sutlers who can supply 18<sup>th</sup> century skates for the Ranger impression.

## **SNOWSHOES**

In the extreme Northern Hemisphere, a traditional means of transportation during long winter months has always been a reliable pair of snowshoes. Simple and robust, these lightweight frames enable effortless walking, since they keep the wearer from sinking into the snow. Their ease of use makes them the ideal choice for walking through open fields, dense woods or crossing other more difficult terrain.

The snow would pile up during the winter months making travel difficult in the ranger's theatre of operation. The rangers that would go out from the fort would usually carry a set of snowshoes with them. They would put them on when confronted by deep snow, which was very common in their theatre of action along the Lake Champlain / Lake George corridor.

The snowshoes were shaped like modern tennis rackets. The frame was made of ash but other woods may suffice. The webbing was made of rawhide. The bindings could be made of leather, rawhide, hemp rope, etc. There are many ways of fastening them to your foot. The foot attire worn for this type of snowshoe is either moccasins or shoepacks. You can use leather shoes but the shoe can damage the snowshoe.

The snow shoe can be 11 – 14 inches wide and about 42 inches in length. There are many styles of snowshoes used but remember the terrain plays a part in the selecting the proper snowshoe.

If you plan to use snowshoes, consult with members of the Battalion who have traditional snowshoes before purchasing a pair that will not fit the impression.

## **ICE CREEPERS**

During the winter months, the rangers put on snowshoes, ice creepers and even ice skates to ease their traveling, and penetrated deep into French-held territory to conduct successful

raids and counter the French irregular forces that also remained active during the winter. The ice creepers were an important part of their equipment during the winter campaign.

An ice creeper is a metal frame, that has spikes protruding downward, that is attached to the bottom of a shoe or moccasin instep to prevent slipping when traveling on foot over slippery surfaces such as ice. In cold climates, winter travel into the backcountry is usually done on foot. To travel into this environment, the person used waterways to travel since they are flat and usually free of deep snow. In order to navigate on these slippery surfaces, one used the ice creepers for improved traction.

Ice creepers can be purchased from a sutler for a minimal cost (less than \$20.00) or homemade. The spikes have to be tailored for the type of footwear that they will be used it. There is a formula for determining the width of the ice creeper.

$$\text{Length of creeper} = \text{Width of instep of your shoe} + 3 \text{ inches}$$

This will give you one and 1/4 inches on each side (bent upwards with a hole for the straps) on each side. There are plans available from Battalion members who own ice creepers if you wish to make them.

## **Minimal Guidelines**

Those individuals who are interested in the possibility of joining Jaeger's Battalion may be invited to an encampment to "try us on," so to speak. Such invitations should be made to seriously interested individuals only, and only with the permission of the Company commander. These minimum guidelines will allow potential recruits to camp and learn with us while still maintaining an 18<sup>th</sup> century atmosphere in our camp. Guests of this nature will be restricted in participating in tactical training or scenarios. This type of visitation is to demonstrate who we are and what we do. Ranger reenacting isn't for everyone.

## **CHECKLIST FOR INVITED POTENTIAL RECRUITS OF JAEGER'S BATTALION**

- Proper 18<sup>th</sup> century shirt, waistcoat, breeches, stockings, footwear, hat as listed in this guide.
- Proper shelter as listed in this guide.

Often Battalion members will generously loan items to interested persons in order to allow them to participate.

## **RECRUIT CHECKLIST**

Once an individual has submitted his application to the Adjutant and received his Battalion Manual, he is now a Ranger recruit. Each recruit must provide himself with the following items before being allowed to participate as a member of Jaeger's Battalion at formal events. This is meant to be a basic list of the items required. Note that these minimums do not include items needed to participate in tactical demonstrations or drill. The descriptions are found elsewhere in this guide. Recruits should always consult with more experienced and knowledgeable Battalion members and/or published resources before making purchases.

- Scot's Bonnet, tricorn, round hat, or jockey cap.
- 18<sup>th</sup> century shirt of proper pattern, material, and color.
- French and Indian period pattern sleeveless or sleeved waistcoat.
- Knee breeches, trousers, or breechcloth.
- Leggings – Indian type of wool or leather.
- Moccasins or shoes
- Stockings – if wearing breeches or trousers

## **ADVANCED CHECKLIST FOR RANGER RECRUITS**

The new recruit should eventually attempt to provide himself with as many of the following items as his resources will permit, being certain that each piece of authentic design and material. Some of these items are required to participate in tactical demonstrations and drill. Details of each item are found elsewhere in this guide.

- A hunting shirt (wagoner's smock) of French and Indian War style.
- A Ranger Uniform coat.
- A canteen
- Woolen blanket
- Authentic shelter and camp equipment
- Waistbelt with frog
- Belt axe or tomahawk
- Belt knife
- Bayonet and scabbard (if using a military arm).
- Proper colonial period firelock. (Smoothbore musket)
- Powder horn
- Cartridge box, belly box, or cartridge pouch. (See note about wooden cartridge blocks in the section about cartridge boxes).
- Winter gear: blanket coat, gloves, knitted caps, etc. Plus, other winter gear as their participation warrants.

## **ABOUT THE GUIDE**

The *Guide For Proper Clothing and Gear in the 1750s* is a “living” document; a work in progress, if you please. Great strides have been made in the past few years towards authenticating the clothing and gear worn by Rogers' Rangers, but new research and new developments make this an ongoing process. This Guide periodically will be updated and revised to reflect new information.

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## **REVISION HISTORY:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision Personnel</b>
January 1997	Capt. Lt. Dave Fagerberg and William Hazelton
February 2009	Sgt. Major Terry Cochran (Battalion Staff), Sgt. Gregg Milk (Schroth's, NY), Pvt. Jeff Johnson (Shisler's, OH), and Pvt. Jerry Knitis (Schroth's, NY).

### **NOTES for this Document:**

Revision History is extremely important. This is just the date and who did it. In software engineering, the Revision History is important. We have added the above Revision Information tag.