

# Recruit Handbook

By Tim Green and Jerry Knitis





## **INTRODUCTION**

Reenacting can be a costly hobby if you are just starting out. Even if you have been in the hobby for some time, the time periods may not coincide and your clothing or equipment may not be interchangeable. Buying any clothing can be expensive. If you have a little skill with a needle, you can make many things yourself. Your basic outfit should consist of clothing items that were 'common' for the period. Shirts, breeches, westkits, shoes, coats and hats were all basic things any man should have. The exact style and quality would depend on the individual social standing and what they could afford. Farmer or woodsman clothing would reflect their environment, as different as a tradesman or merchant. One of the common debates regarding period clothing is the type of material or cloth used. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the most common fabric used was linen and wool. Cottons, while available were imported from the Far East and very expensive. Leather, especially in the rural areas and on the frontier was common.

## **PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL**

This manual is aimed at the raw recruit that is getting into a ranger unit for the first time. He may very well be new to reenacting as well. This manual is to help you, the recruit, to make wise choices when selecting your clothing and equipment. This manual will attempt to categorize your immediate needs to get started.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AS A RANGER RECRUIT:**

There are many questions that a recruit may have when first joining the company. This document tries to answer many of them but the first one that most rangers remember are:

1. What do I need?
2. How much will it cost?
3. How do I procure it?
4. How soon do I need it?
5. New or used?
6. How much time do I have to devote?
7. How do I learn more about the rangers?
8. Do I need insurance and how do I get it?

## Ranger Recruit Handbook

In this document we attempt to point you in the right direction. Every unit (even in the rangers) has its own set of rules and the recruit needs to find out what they are. Also, many of the rangers in the selected unit will be more than glad to guide you down the road to become a good member. You will be a reflection of their unit. Do not be afraid to ask questions.

## WHAT DO I NEED?

This becomes one of the most perplexing questions when a new member prepares to join the unit. In the following parts of this section, we attempt to prepare the recruit with information on how to handle this problem.

### **UNIFORMS/CLOTHING**

#### **MUST HAVE TO GET STARTED**

The most important part of starting out in this hobby is getting the correct clothing for the time frame. Consulting members of your unit or the commanding officer does this. The unit may have a document that spells out what is required in the way of clothing.

#### **BASIC CLOTHING**

This will get you started and allow you to participate in events.

- Breeches (pants), French fly (buttons down the front), osnaburg, linen, wool, etc.; green, brown, gray. Woods colors. Stay away from white or bright stripes for rangers.
- The shirt, a long hunter or farmer style. Choice of colors may be brown, tan, green, dark blue, etc.
- Footwear: shoes, buckles; moccasins or bare footed (Not recommended)
- Weskit (waist coat); wool, linen, Jonesburg or any period correct material. Once again, try to stay away from cotton. Although it was used, it was extremely costly and purchased by the wealthy. Color: brown, green, etc.
- Indian Stockings / leggings; seam to side, color green, brown, blue etc. They extend from top of shoes to mid thigh.
- 18th Century socks with leather garters (wool or cotton) no stripes.
- Scotch Bonnet (blue or blue with a red band)
- Ranger Belt (plain 18th century leather belt with a iron or brass buckle)
- Belt Knife (18th century style; not bowie style)
- Frog (which is a special attachment to the belt) to hold bayonet and tomahawk.

- Tomahawk.
- Garter for leggings (woven wool, cloth or leather)

## Musket

### Major item

As a ranger, the musket is the single most important item next to the clothing.

### Most costly

Time frame to purchase?

This will be a unit requirement. Check with the unit commander.

### Make a wise choice

Talk to your unit commander and other members of the unit. Remember that the rangers enlisted for a year at a time and there were many shortages as far as weapons go. Many of the rangers carried their own personal firelocks with them or pick one up on the battlefield as booty.

### Type of Firelock/Musket:

- The majority of rangers carried smooth bore muskets. Rifled barrels were rare. This will be important when choosing a musket.
- Fowlers and trade guns are found amongst the ranks. The dating of weapons is also important. The weapons used in the F&I War may be as old as 50 years. They also can be weapons from the enemy side as well.
- If you own or purchase an original firelock/musket (one made in the 18th century), you will not be allowed to fire it at events (safety issue).
- Always consult with the commanding officer before purchasing the musket. This could be a costly error if you do not follow these simple guidelines.

### Accoutrements (accessories) for musket:

- Large powder horn
- Cleaning tools that can be carried in a gun pouch (optional).
- Gunn Pouch (leather, woolen or other)
- Bayonet for musket (if applicable)
- Carrying case for musket (woolen or canvas ... optional)
- Lock Cover (optional ... usually made by owner)
- Belly Box or bullet pouch (rangers choice)
- Bullet mould (optional)
- Patch knife (optional)
- Tampion (optional)
- Lock Cover (optional)

## **SHELTER**

A tent is needed for participating in events.

A tent is needed for attending events unless you want to pay for lodging nearby and commute back and forth. Check with members or unit commander to see if the unit requires you to stay with them. If you stay on-site, you will need a tent.

You may be able to bunk in with others temporarily if there is room.

## **NEEDED TO ADVANCE FROM RANGER RECRUIT**

Some units need a minimum kit to bring you from recruit status to full ranger (private). You will need to consult the **unit commander** for this requirement since it varies with units.

Each unit has its own method of advancement. If you have concerns about advancement, you will need to talk to the **unit commander**.

## **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

Usually you will want to participate as much as you can afford in time or money. Some units have requirements for number of events a member has to attend to stay on active status while others don't. You should check with the members of the unit or **unit commander**.

Registration for events is done by the unit commander. He will make known to all members what events are available for the year. You will then notify him of the events you intend to attend. The unit commander registers the unit into the event and you as a member can attend.

The event coordinators frown on individual registration for many reasons. If you try to do it, you will be turned away from the event.

## **INSURANCE**

In recent years, many of the sites require that attendees for events carry Liability insurance. This has been caused by the fear of lawsuits stemming from accidents or carelessness of individuals. The intent here is to have the recruit be knowledgeable of the requirement.

You need to consult with the **unit commander** on how the unit handles the matter of insurance. In the New York Company, your insurance is covered by your yearly membership dues. Some other units do it differently.





# WHAT IS THE COST TO GET GOING?

The cost will depend on your ingenuity. If you can sew or make the needed items, you will drive the price down. Also, you can purchase used clothing and equipment. However, you will devote more time to the hobby. You may also learn more.

Cost of basic kit (define basic kit and obtain an approximate cost from a sutler). The dollar values are estimates based on many sutler's. These are shown to give the recruit a rough idea of the cost. The recruit can also make his own clothing and equipment. Many of the unit members make parts of their kits. The recruit will have to ask members. These prices are an average price of new items. If you can find used items in reasonable condition and a good price, you can purchase used.

## Clothing

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| • Shirt                 | \$35 - \$65  |
| • Breeches (French fly) | \$45 - \$70  |
| • Weskit                | \$80 - \$110 |
| • Hunting shirt         | \$45 - \$70  |
| • Buckled shoes         | \$80 - \$145 |
| • Hat                   | \$12 - \$70  |
| • Stockings             | \$8 - \$16   |
| • Moccasins             | \$25 - \$60  |
| • Legging/gaiters       | \$20 - \$40  |

## Arms and accoutrements

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| • Appropriate belt  | \$20 - \$45  |
| • Tomahawk  | \$27 - \$35  |
| • Knife   | \$20 - \$300 |
| • Cartridge Box   | \$50 - \$100 |
| • "Belly box" (nice to have for events)                               |              |
| • Shoulder case   |              |
| • Musket  |              |
| • New   | \$500+       |
| • Used  | \$200+       |
| • Bayonet w scabbard (if carrying a military musket)                  | \$50 - \$150 |
| • Frog for tomahawk and bayonet. Be sure to purchase an F&I War frog. | \$20 - \$50  |

**CAMP GEAR**

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| • Tin plate or wooden bowl                              | \$10 - \$35 |
| • Tin cup   | \$3 - \$12  |
| • Spoon (knife and fork optional)                       | \$3 - \$8   |
| • Trade blanket (minimum for sleeping and blanket roll) | \$8 - 70\$  |
| • Canteen (wood, tin or gourd)                          | \$40 - \$70 |
| • Some type of cooking vessel                           | \$18 - \$60 |

**TENTAGE (Shelter)****What type and size tent do I need?**

The cost of a tent can range from \$150 - \$700 depending on the type of wedge tent you purchase and the material the tent is made of. Most tents come without poles. The poles, stakes, tent lines must be added to the cost. You need storm lines for your tent. Check with members of your selected unit for help. Also check with the **unit commander** on the type of tent you will be allowed to use.

If your family (wife, children, etc) will be going with you, you may want to opt for a larger tent.

Settler's that carry tentage products:

- Tentsmiths
- Panther Primitives
- Jas. Townsend
- Mighty Niagara Products of the 18th Century

Tent Types:

Since you are serving in a military outfit, there are certain types of tents that are reserved for the officers and not normally used by enlisted personnel.

- Military wedge (strongly recommended)
- Other types with permission of **commanding officer**.

# EVENTS

This will depend on the unit's requirements. However, you will get out of it what you put into it. There are many scheduled for the year. Our unit schedules them for all seasons.

## **EVENT TYPES:**

**Reenactments:** Definition; "Historical reenactment is a type of role-play in which participants attempt to recreate some aspects of a historical event or period. It may be a well-defined period, such as a specific war or other event, or it may be more broadly defined."

Historical reenactment includes a continuum from well researched attempts to recreate a known historical event for educational purposes, through representations with theatrical elements, to competitive events for purposes of entertainment, which might be considered a form of live-action role-playing within a historical context."

**Encampments:** This event will basically be just what it is. There maybe a tactical demonstration or even a battle but they will not portray any actual event.

**Tactical:** This is an event where the units are divided into to there actual camps (French and British). Each side tries to capture the other side's camp (like capture the flag) using actual 18th century tactics.

## **COST:**

The events usually have no fee attached to them. However, you will be responsible to pay for your transportation, meals and shelter (if not staying on-site). Also at most of the events, the sutler's are present. This will be your chance to purchase needed items as well as nice to have items. This will add to your cost.

One way to lessen your cost is team up with a member from your local and share transportation cost.

Many units share the costs for food for the weekend. Some units divide the items needed and ask the members attending to provide them. The New York Company of Rangers collects a small fee for the weekend meals. It is a real bargain.

## **CAMP DUTIES:**

The members attending the event share the camp duties such as getting fire wood, fetching water, and preparation of meals as well as clean up. The items of fetching water, cooking gathering firewood usually fell on the camp distaff (women and children) during the 18th century. However, the Rangers usually go for water and fetch the firewood. They also do much of the cooking and fire starting. If you asked to do a job, you should do it willingly.

Each member is responsible for his (her) own equipment and tentage. If a member is having problems, other members are always willing to help out. The unit actually becomes one large family.

## **Night Watches / Guard Duty**

In the military, guard duty is a standard occurrence. At our events, we will be asked to stand

watch for various reasons usually for camp security. The men of the unit usually do this. Sometimes a woman will stand watch with her man.

### **TRAINING**

Every unit will have some form of training. This will be spelled out by the commanding officer and carried out by the unit NCOs.

The main elements that everyone needs to know are musket safety, drill and battlefield tactics. Some units have a more in depth training curriculum such as Jaeger's Battalion. This unit has a program that is offered to all its members called "Senior Ranger".

### **Drill**

Why Drill?

Builds confidence and discipline in the unit.

When?

The musket drill is done by the unit at events

Musket drill can another member that knows the drill

Documentation

Use training documents provided by the commanding officer of the unit. (Drill CD, Unit Training Manual, etc.). This way you will be doing the proper drill for the unit.

### **Tactics**

Tactics are taught and practiced at events when the unit is together.

The tactics practiced are usually the ones we will use during the event.

Practicing tactics on your own is extremely difficult.

### **Marksmanship**

Marksmanship training will be done at selected events spelled out by the Commanding Officer and his staff. If doing this on your own, be sure you follow all safety rules regarding the black powder weapons.

Also make sure that you practice in a safe, designated place. If you do not have a place to fire your musket, contact a member that does and try to make arrangements with that member for shooting. It is better to work in the buddy system.

**SAFETY** is paramount.

# READING MATERIAL

There are a lot of historical books, papers, etc on the French and Indian War. The unit will not place on your shoulders required reading. However to make yourself a better ranger, you should do some reading to better understand what a ranger would be expected to do.

In this section we have divided the reading material into two major sections; strongly recommended and recommended. A Ranger recruit should read as many as he can to understand the time period, the war and Rogers' corps of Rangers.

## STRONGLY RECOMMENDED READING

### General French and Indian War History:

- "Wolfe and Montcalm" by Francis Parkman
- "Crucible of War" by Fred Anderson
- "America's First World War" by Tim Todish

### Ranger History

- "Illustrated and Annotated Journals of Robert Rogers" by Tim Todish and Gary Zaboly
- "Journals of Major Robert Rogers" by Major Robert Rogers, London, 1765. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI, 1966
- "Robert Rogers and his Rangers" by John Cuneo
- "American Colonial Ranger – The Northern Colonies" by Gary Zaboly
- The series of books written by Burt Loescher:
  - "The History of Rogers' Rangers, Volume I: The Beginning"
  - "The History of Rogers' Rangers, Volume II: Genesis - Rogers' Rangers - The First Green Berets"
  - "The History of Rogers' Rangers, Volume III: Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers"
  - "The History of Rogers' Rangers, Volume IV: The St. Francis Raid"
- "A True Ranger: The life and Many Wars of Major Robert Rogers" by Gary Zaboly
- "American Colonial Ranger, The Northern Colonies 1724-64" by Zaboly, Gary.
- "White Devil: A True Story of War, Savagery, and Vengeance in Colonial America" Stephen Brumwell
- "Robert Rogers' Rules for the Ranging Service – An Analysis" by Matt Wulff
- "RANGER ... North American Frontier Soldier" by Matt Wulff
- "Northwest Passage" by Kenneth Roberts (fiction and made into a movie)

In selecting books, it is our consensus that every Ranger (recruit up to Commanding officers) should own the book "Illustrated and Annotated Journals of Robert Rogers" by Tim

Todish and Gary Zaboly. This specific book is loaded with information and illustration that are valuable to everyone. Gary Zaboly also does an excellent job of describing the clothing of the Rangers.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

### **18th Century / French and Indian War:**

- “Mohawk Baronet” by James Leckner
- “Paths of Glory” Stephen Brumwell
- “Captors and Captives” Evan Haefelli and Kevin Sweeny
- “Warfare On The Colonial Frontier: Rogers and Bouquet” by Robert Rogers and Henry Bouquet
- “The Scalp Hunters Abenacki Ambush at Lovewell Pond – 1725” by Alfred E. Kayworth and Raymond G. Potvin
- “War on the Run” John Ross
- “Redcoat” by Stephen Brumwell
- “The French and Indian War” by Donald Barr Chidsey
- “REMINISCENSES of the FRENCH WAR” by Luther Roby

### **French Side of the War: (need to know your enemy)**

- “Battle on Snowshoes” by Bob Bearor (French View)
- “Leading By Example” by Bob Bearor (French Leaders ... 3 Volumes)
- “Memoirs of the Late War in North America Between France and England” by Pierre Pouchot

### **Other books on the Colonial Period:**

- “The Colonial Wars 1689 – 1762” by Howard H. Peckham
- “The Skulking Way of War” by Robert Malone
- “A Sample View of Colonial Life” by Mary Cobb

### **Books on making your own 18th Century Items**

- “Tidings From the 18th Century” by Beth Gilgun (clothing)
- “Recreating the American Long Rifle” by William Buchle
- “Recreating the 18th Century Hunting Pouch” by T.C. Albert
- “Recreating the 18th Century Powder Horn” by Scott & Kathy Sibley

# List of Sutlers

This list of sutlers is by no means complete. These are a few which the authors deal with and know of. There are many reputable sutlers. Talking with members of the unit or the commanding officer will steer you to them. Also note that at events, reenactors will put out trade blankets to sell their unused equipment. This is another way of obtaining your equipment.

## LOCAL (NEWYORK STATE)

- Barkertown Sutlers... <http://www.barkertownsutlers.com>
- Livonia Smithery ... <http://www.livoniasmithery.com>

## OTHERS

- Burnley & Trowbridge ... <http://www.burnleyandtrowbridge.com/>
- Druid's Oak ... <http://www.druidsoak.com/>
- Fugawee ... <http://www.fugawee.com/>
- G. Gedney Godwin ... <http://www.gggodwin.com/>
- Jas. Townsend and Son ... <http://www.jastown.com/>
- Moscow Hide and Fur ... <http://www.hideandfur.com/>
- Panther Primitive ... <http://www.pantherprimitives.com/>
- RK Lodges ... <http://www.rklodges.com/>
- Smiling Fox Forge ... <http://www.smilingfoxforge.com/>
- Smoke and Fire ... <http://www.smoke-fire.com/>
- Tentsmiths ... <http://www.tentsmiths.com/>
- Roy Najecki ... <http://www.najecki.com/>

## FIRELOCK / MUSKET DEALERS

### LOCAL (NEW YORK STATE)

#### Mighty Niagara Products of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

James Brown  
766 Willowbrook Dr  
Lockport, New York 14094  
E-mail: [jbrown\\_14105@yahoo.com](mailto:jbrown_14105@yahoo.com)  
Distributor for Loyalsits Arms, Tentsmith, etc.  
Jaeger's Bn. Armor (Highly recommended)

## OTHERS

**The Rifle Shoppe**

18420 E. Hefner Road  
 Jones, Oklahoma 73049  
 (405) 396-2583 Tel  
 (405) 396-8450 Fax  
 Email: [trshoppe@aol.com](mailto:trshoppe@aol.com)  
 URL: <http://www.therifleshoppe.com/>

**North Star West, Inc.**

P.O. Box 487  
 57 Terrace Court  
 Superior, MT 59872  
 Phone: (406) 822-8778  
 (8:00 am and 5:00 pm MOUNTAIN TIME)  
 E-mail: [Laffindog@msn.com](mailto:Laffindog@msn.com)  
 URL: <http://www.northstarwest.com/>

**Early Rustic Arms**

L.E. Williams  
 1720 Downing Rd.  
 Kirksey, Kentucky  
 Phone: 270-489-2663  
 URL: <http://www.earlyrusticarms.com/>

**Log Cabin Shop**

PO Box 275  
 8010 Lafayette Rd.  
 Lodi, Ohio 44254  
 Phone: (330) 948-1082  
 Fax: (330) 948-4307  
 E-mail: [logcabin@logcabinshop.com](mailto:logcabin@logcabinshop.com)  
 URL: <http://www.logcabinshop.com/>

**Loyalists Arms and Repairs**

10 Brunt Road,  
 Harrietsfield, Nova Scotia, Canada B3V 1B1  
 Phone: 1 (902) 479-0967  
 Fax: 1 (902) 479-0032  
 E-mail: [loyalistarms@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:loyalistarms@hfx.eastlink.ca)  
 URL: <http://www.loyalistarms.freeservers.com/>

**Tennessee Valley Manufacturing (TVM)**

14 CR 521  
 Corinth, Mississippi 38834  
 Phone: 1-662-287-6021  
 URL: <http://www.avsia.com/tvm/>

**Track of the Wolf, Inc**

18308 Joplin Street N.W.  
 Elk River, Mn 55380-1773  
 Phone: 763-633-2500  
 Fax: 763-633-2550  
 URL: <http://www.trackofthewolf.com>

**Jim Chambers Flintlocks, Ltd.**

116 Sam's Branch Road  
 Candler, North Carolina 28715  
 Phone: 828/667-8361 (Mon-Fri 9 AM-5 PM)  
 Fax: 828/665-0852 (anytime)  
 Email: [chambers@flintlocks.com](mailto:chambers@flintlocks.com)  
 URL: <http://www.flintlocks.com/>



**Ackerman & Company  
Antique Firearms**

Rt. 7

Pownal, VT.

Phone: 802-823-9874

Fax: 802-823-7925

URL: <http://www.muskets.net/>**Dixon Muzzleloading Shop, Inc.**

9952 Kunkels Mill Road

Kempton, PA 19529

Phone: 610-756-6271

URL: <http://dixonmuzzleloading.com/>**Pecatonica River Long Rifle Supply**

P. O. Box 2791

Rockford, IL 61132 US

Phone: (815) 968-1995

Fax: (815) 968-1996

E-mail: [sales@longrifles-pr.com](mailto:sales@longrifles-pr.com)URL: <http://www.longrifles-pr.com/>**Otter Creek Rifle Works**

421 Musket Drive

Williamsburg, Va. 23185

PHONE: (757) 645-4411

E-mail us: [info@ottercreekrifleworks.com](mailto:info@ottercreekrifleworks.com)URL: <http://www.ottercreekrifleworks.com/>

# ROGERS RANGERS COMPANIES

## LOCATIONS AND WEBSITES

These are a few of the ranger units that appear at most events in the northeast.

### JAEGER'S BATTALION

#### Michigan Company

Base: Grand Rapids, Michigan

Web Site: <http://www.rogersrangers.com/>

#### Pennsylvania Company

Base:

Web Site: [http://rogers\\_rangers\\_pa\\_co.tripod.com/Pa\\_Co\\_of\\_Rogers\\_Rangers/index.html](http://rogers_rangers_pa_co.tripod.com/Pa_Co_of_Rogers_Rangers/index.html)

#### Illinois Company

Base: Illinois

Web Site: <http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/9053/intro.html>

#### New York Company (Schroth's)

Base: Syracuse, New York

Web Sites:

- Everyone: Not Operational at this time
- Members Only: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYCompanyofRangers/>

## OTHER INDEPENDENT COMPANIES

### Major Bray's Company

Base: Rochester, New York

Web Site: <http://www.frontiernet.net/~george/>

### Wulff's Rangers

Base: Custar, Ohio

Website: <http://www.wulffsrangers.com/>

### Rogers Rangers Company

Base: Connecticut

Web Site: <http://www.rogersrangers.org/>

### James Rogers' Company

Base: Montreal

Web Site: [http://reenacting.net/qhc/james\\_co/index.html](http://reenacting.net/qhc/james_co/index.html)

### Tute's Company

Base: Wisconsin

Web Site: <http://www.foxrivertraders.com/tute.htm>

**Moses Hazen's Company**

Base: Indiana

Web Site: <http://www.hazens.org/officers.html>

**Other interesting Web Sites****Forts:**

Fort at No. 4 (on the Connecticut River at Charlestown, NH) ... <http://www.fortat4.org/>

Fort Crown Point (15 miles north of Ticonderoga) ... <http://www.historiclakes.org>

Fort Meigs (Perrysburg, Ohio) ... <http://www.fortmeigs.org/>

Fort Necessity (Pennsylvania) ... <http://www.nps.gov/fone/>

Fort Niagara (Youngstown, New York) ... <http://www.oldfortniagara.org/>

Fort Ontario (Oswego, New York) ... <http://www2.potsdam.edu/smith20/fortontario.html>

Fort Stanwix (Rome, New York) ... <http://www.nps.gov/fost/>

Fort Ticonderoga (Ticonderoga, New York) ... <http://www.fort-ticonderoga.org/>

Fortress of Louisbourg (Louisbourg, Nova Scotia) ... <http://fortress.uccb.ns.ca/>

Fort LaPresentation (Ogdensburg, New York) ... <http://www.fortlapresentation.net/>

**Other:**

Historical Trekking (loads of information) ... <http://www.historicaltrekking.com/>

The Historical Trek (document your equipment) ... <http://www.cnnwebdesign.com/paladin/>

Sarah's 18th Century Living History Website ... <http://reenacting.net/sfmlh.html>