1775 British Prisoners of War Guidelines

The terms of capitulation for British-held Fort St. Jean and Chamblee in the fall of 1775 required British soldiers to surrender their arms, belting, cartridge pouches and even their drums to the victorious Northern Continental Army. Yet Article II of the November 2, 1775 Articles of Capitulation of St. John stated, "The Effects of the Garrison shall not be withheld from them." Accordingly, soldiers from the 26th Regiment of Foot and 7th Royal Fusiliers retained their personal property inclusive of their clothing on their back and in their knapsacks. Though the sieges of St. Jean and Chamblee continued well into the fall, they still preceded the normal annual clothing of British regiments in Canada. New regimental clothing became the spoils of war as the Continental Army subsequently captured Montreal in November. The Continental Army also British soldiers' winter clothing, like Canadian-style capotes, fur caps, & mittens, as the continued their advance towards Quebec. Much to the discomfort of captured British soldiers, they journeyed south through Ticonderoga wearing the same old regimental clothing in which they attempted to stop the American advance down the Richelieu River.

Shirts

Best: Hand-stitched white linen shirt with ruffles, narrow band cuffs made for sleeve buttons (cuff links). Hand-stitched blue and white checked linen shirts.

Acceptable: Machine stitched checked or white linen shirts, narrow band cuffs with thread dorset buttons.

Unacceptable: Cotton calico or plaid shirts.

Neckwear

Best: Black velvet neck stocks buckled at the back.

Acceptable: Cotton neckerchiefs or linen rollers worn off-duty.

Discouraged: Black horsehair or linen neck stocks.

Unacceptable: Leather neck stocks.

Stockings

Best: White or grey wool yarn or worsted stockings constructed with back seams.

Acceptable: White stockings or socks of wool yarn, worsted, linen or cotton.

Unacceptable: Colored, or polyester stockings

Coats

The captured garrisons of St. Jean and Chambly included battalion company officers, as well as light infantry and grenadier officers of the 7th Royal Fusiliers and 26th Regiment of Foot. Enlisted soldiers of these battalion and flank companies were among those captured as well. Weather permitting, soldiers of the paraded in their full-length, laced regimental coats. British soldiers retained their previous year's coat as their personal property, in addition to their regimental coat. Regimental tailors generally altered the old coats into simple unlaced, short coats for fatigue and comfort off-duty. For the purposes of this event a second coat could be worn for fatigue, off-duty, or if no other coat is available.

Best: Hand-finished, well-fit, wool broadcloth British regimental coat of madder red wool conforming to the 1768 warrant, with yellow facings or royal blue, laced with 7th Fusiliers or 26th Regimental lace and buttons, lined with white bay. For Light Infantry, well-fit, wool broadcloth British regimental jacket of madder red wool conforming to the 1771 light infantry pattern clothing, including slash pockets and wings. For Grenadiers, well-fit, wool broadcloth British regimental coat, with wings and grenade ornaments on the turnback corners.

Acceptable: Well-fit wool broadcloth British regimental coat of madder red wool conforming to the 1768 warrant with yellow or royal blue facings, laced, lined with white bay lining with minor visible machine stitching. Short, unlaced second coats, with regimentally appropriate facings, worn for fatigue, or in lieu of a regimental coat.

Unacceptable: Anything else.

Waistcoats

Best: Hand-finished, well-fit, white wool broadcloth regimental waistcoat, with welted pockets, lined in coarse natural linen. For Light Infantry, hand-finished, well-fit, madder red wool broadcloth regimental waistcoat, square-cut, laced or unlaced with welted pockets, 7th Fusiliers or 26th Regimental buttons lined in coarse natural linen.

Acceptable: Well-fit, linen ticking, drilling, or sheeting summer waistcoat, or white wool broadcloth regimental waistcoat with minor visible machine stitching.

Unacceptable: Civilian or baggy waistcoats.

Breeches

Best: Hand-finished, well-fit, white kersey or broadcloth regimental breeches, lined in coarse white linen, with buckled or buttoned knee bands.

Acceptable: Well-fit breeches of white wool broadcloth, kersey, or summer breeches of linen ticking, drilling, or sheeting with minor visible machine stitching.

Unacceptable: Trousers, overall trousers, baggy breeches.

Cocked Hats

Best: Hand-finished, round blocked, black wool cocked hat, bound in white, with a black horsehair cockade, white wool cockade loop and 26th Regimental button. For Light Infantry, hand-finished, round blocked, black wool cap hat, bound in white or leather light infantry caps. For Grenadiers, hand-finished, round blocked, black wool cocked hat, unbound, with a black horsehair cockade, white wool cocking ties, cockade loop and 26th Regimental button. Grenadier cap conforming to the 1768 Royal Warrant pattern.

Acceptable: Black wool cocked hat, bound in white with a black cockade and white loop, minor visible machine stitching or oval blocked.

Unacceptable: Slouch hats, grey or brown wool felt hats, cut down felt caps, straw hats.

Forage Caps

Best: Hand-finished, well-fit madder broadcloth cap turned up with yellow or royal blue broadcloth.

Acceptable: madder broadcloth cap turned up with yellow or royal broadcloth, with minor visible machine stitching.

Unacceptable: Anything else

Shoes

Best: Hand-finished, short or long quartered, round toe, shoes with black waxed calf uppers, fitted for buckles.

Acceptable: Machine-made black leather, shoes with buckles or ties.

Unacceptable: Modern Footwear, moccasins, shoe boots, half-boots, high-lows, Civil War bootees, or riding boots.

Legwear

Best: Well-fit, hand-finished black painted linen half-gaiters.

Discouraged: Black wool leggings or tall gaiters.

Unacceptable: Anything else.

Knapsacks

Best: Shoulder straps, closing with three buff leather British goatskin knapsack with buff leather straps and buckles.

Unacceptable: Anything else.

Canteens

Best: Half-moon shaped tined-iron canteen slung from a narrow hemp cord.

Acceptable: Kidney-shaped tinned-iron canteen or similar pattern.

Unacceptable: Anything Else.

Haversacks

Best: Plain osnaburg linen haversack, closing with two or three small plain pewter or brass buttons, with the Government Stamp in the bottom corner.

Acceptable: Plain osnaburg linen haversack.

Unacceptable: Anything Else.