

# FORT TICONDEROGA

## **Captain William Delaplace's Guard, 26th Regiment of Foot**

On the morning of May 10, 1775 the British soldiers and their families posted to Fort Ticonderoga considered themselves on peacetime garrison duty, even as events proved otherwise. Those portraying Captain William Delaplace's Guard of the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot will represent soldiers who guarded Fort Ticonderoga as Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold, & the Green Mountain Boys made their surprise attack. Beyond stewards of this storied Fort, the soldiers of the 26th Foot were part of the British Army's defense and police for a global colonial empire after the French & Indian War. The 26th Foot had Scottish roots, known "Covenanters," referencing its original raising for armed religious protesters in southwest Scotland during the Glorious Revolution. Though the 1770s were a low point in the Regiment's Scottish character, the nickname, "Cameronians," still appeared before an official designation in 1782. The 26th Foot rotated from the Irish Establishment onto garrison duty in the American Colonies in 1767. Initially posted to New Jersey then New York City in 1771, the regiment transferred to Canada in 1773, garrisoning posts along the Saint Lawrence and Lake Champlain Valleys.



By May 1775 Fort Ticonderoga's reputation far exceeded the real strength of this post. British Engineer Captain-Lieutenant John Montross described Fort Ticonderoga in May, 1774 as being "composed of decayed Wood and Earth," suggesting the, "ruinous situation," of the fort was beyond repair. He added, "the unhealthiness of the place, the Garrison being then ill with Fevers and Agues, the badness of the Water." The only serviceable part of Ticonderoga was the barracks since they were "repairable, being made of Stone." The 26th Foot had maintained a substantial garrison at Fort Crown Point, the vastly larger Fort 15 miles down Lake Champlain, until the fort burned down on April 21, 1773 thanks to a soap making business run out of the soldiers' barracks. Despite the general decay of Fort Ticonderoga, it was still the best regional option when Governor General Guy Carleton began to build up troops in the area as a possible counter to rebellion in New England.

In May, rebellion remained merely rumors for Captain William Delaplace and his guard. Captain Delaplace commanded a guard of twenty-nine soldiers through the winter of 1774-1775, drawn from many companies of the 26th Foot, including his own. Despite their elite status, even three grenadiers were drafted into Delaplace's guard. Lieutenant Jocelyn Feltham delivered a reinforcement bringing the whole guard to to forty-two by May 10, 1775. Captain Delaplace also commanded four artilleryman

detached to tend to cannons and munitions from the Royal Artillery. The 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot received stellar comments at regimental inspections in 1771 and 1772. None-the-less, many of Delaplace's men had served since rotation onto American service, if not long before. Lieutenant Jocelyn Feltham, noted in his roster of captured men: "those marked O are old wore out & unserviceable- & very few that can stand fatigue but those mark'd with an S: being chiefly the party brought down by Lt Feltham a few days before are serviceable those without any mark are middling." American accounts from the capture describe training guns outwards between south soldiers' barracks of stone and north soldiers' barracks of wood to cover the British soldiers and their families within. Along with the soldiers captured in May, were approximately twenty-four women and children, the families of this peacetime guard.

Despite being a Scottish regiment, the December 19, 1768 Royal Clothing Warrant and the Grenadier Book of 1768 both listed the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment of foot in standard British soldier's dress. Though the regiment's colonel, John Scott, represented Fifeshire Scotland in Parliament, the regiment lost much of its Scottish character through the 1770s. Ironically, the 26<sup>th</sup> Foot returned to Canadian garrison duty in 1787 proudly sporting new buttons emblazoned with Scottish thistles. By 1881, the regiment adopted highland dress as the King's Cameroonian Rifles. Outside of special winter clothing for service in Canada, Captain Delaplace's guard was attired and equipped as per regulations and common practice in the British Army.

### **Shirts**

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

*Acceptable:* Machine stitched checked or white linen shirts.

*Unacceptable:* Cotton calico or plaid shirts.



## Neckwear

*Best:* Black velvet neck stocks buckled at the back.

*Acceptable:* Black Horsehair neck stocks, cotton neckerchiefs or linen rollers worn off-duty.

*Unacceptable:* Leather or linen neck stocks.

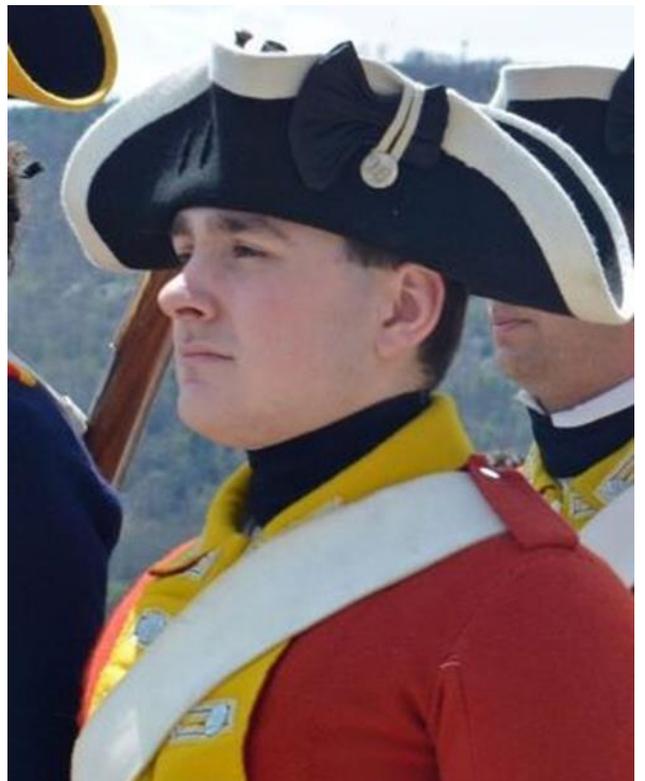


## Cocked Hats

*Best:* Hand-finished, round blocked, black wool cocked hat, bound in white, with a black horsehair cockade, white wool cockade loop and button.

*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.

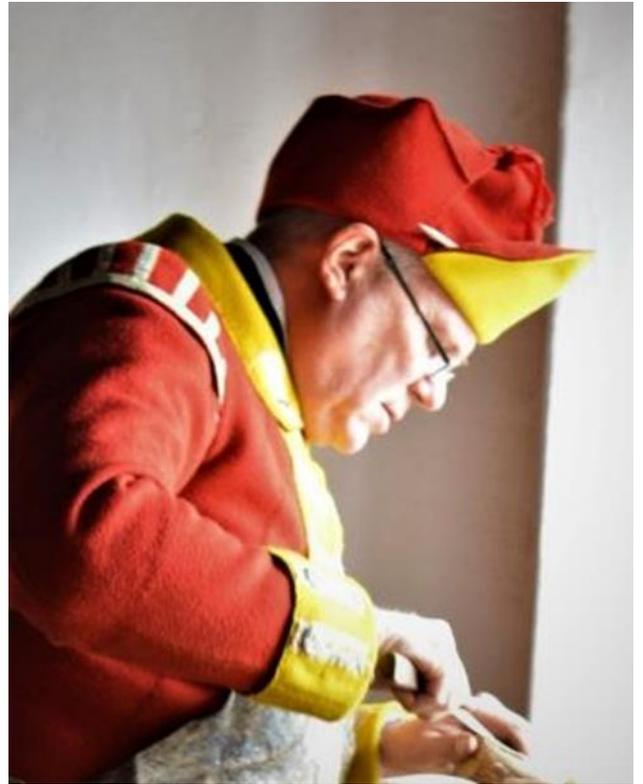


## Forage Caps

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

**Acceptable:** Madder broadcloth cap with turban yellow broadcloth front flap with minor visible machine stitching. Plain blue Scots bonnets.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else



## Coats

Weather permitting, soldiers of the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot paraded in their full-length, laced regimental coats. On peacetime garrison duty it is likely that soldiers turned their previous year's coat into a second clothing coat for fatigue and comfort off duty. These simple unlaced short coats would have been the soldiers' property, in addition to their regimental coat. 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, laced, and lined with white bay or serge lining.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit wool broadcloth British regimental coat of madder red wool conforming to the 1768 warrant with yellow, laced, lined with white bay or serge lining with minor visible machine stitching. Second clothing coat.

**Unacceptable:** Civilian coats or roundabout jackets.



## Waistcoats

*Best:* Hand-finished, well-fit, white regimental broadcloth waistcoat, with welted pockets, lined in coarse white linen.

*Acceptable:* Well-fit, white 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 or buff broadcloth, kersey, or Russia drilling with minor visible machine stitching.

*Unacceptable:* Trousers, overall trousers, baggy breeches.



## 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.

## 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

As late as April 26, 1775 General Orders for the British Army in North America required, "The men to mount guard in half gaiters for the future; but to carry their leggings with them, that they may be put on, if a change of weather should require it, especially at night." Though brown and blue wool donation cloth was supplied in later campaigns, for the timeframe of this event, black wool is preferred for uniformity. Like the rest of the British Army in North America, soldiers of the 26th wore their half-gaiters when weather permitted that spring.

*Best:* Well-fit, hand-finished black painted linen half-gaiters with a spare pair of black wool leggings.

*Acceptable:* Well-fit, hand-finished British Army leggings of black cloth with a 5-7 button placket at the ankle, instep strap, worn with black leather garters below the knee.

*Unacceptable:* Anything else.

## Cartridge Pouches

*Best:* Hand-made 1760s style soft bodied cartridge pouch with a white buff shoulder strap.

*Acceptable:* British 36 or 29-hole cartridge pouches, on a white buff leather shoulder strap. 18-hole belly box as additional cartridge box.

*Discouraged:* 18-hole belly box as primary cartridge box.

*Unacceptable:* Hunting pouches, soft cartridge pouches, new model American pouches.

## Arms

*Best:* Long land pattern British muskets, with a well fit bayonet and a white buff leather sling.

*Acceptable:* Short land pattern British muskets, with a well fit bayonet

*Unacceptable:* All others.

## Side Arms



*Best:* Whitened buff waist belt with a belt plate, holding a black leather scabbard and bayonet.

*Acceptable:* Shoulder converted waist belt with a belt plate or buckle, holding a black leather scabbard and bayonet.

*Unacceptable:* Black leather belts, shoulder belts, horse pistols, naval pistols, unsheathed bayonets, tomahawks, or belt axes.

### **Knapsacks**

*Best:* British goatskin knapsack with 3 buff closure straps and buckles.

*Acceptable:* British painted knapsacks with similar structures.

*Unacceptable:* Isaac Royal House or other later pattern knapsacks.

### **Canteens**

*Best:* Half-moon shaped tinned-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.

### **Blankets**

*Best:* White Hand-woven British Army Issue blanket with white or brown stripes and Government Stamp.

*Acceptable:* 3- Point Rose, Dutch, or Plain white blankets.

*Unacceptable:* Civil War grey blankets, Hudson Bay "Point" Blankets.

