

# CARRYING THE WEIGHT OF A SOLDIER



GRADES 4-5

Before the American Revolution, Ticonderoga and the surrounding areas were not heavily settled. Many of the soldiers and militia men who served with the American Army travelled long distances by foot to arrive at Fort Ticonderoga. Ezra Tilden was a militia man during the American Revolution who was drafted to serve on July 20th, 1776. Tilden traveled along with Captain Endicott's Company from Stoughton, Massachusetts, joining Colonel Ephraim Wheelock's Militia Regiment at Ticonderoga. Before leaving for Ticonderoga, he wrote an account of what he carried in his knapsack, which you will read below.

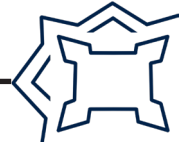
Note on Reading Historical Text: This is a transcription, or typed copy of writing from 1776, where the spelling and punctuation has been left in its original form. This document comes from a time when grammar and spelling rules were different, and sometimes non-existent. Some of the words or phrases may appear confusing, but reading slowly, reading out loud, and looking for clues will help.

"An account of some things I Carry'd into the Army in my Pack:

A Woolen Shirt with a snuff bottle full of ground Coffee in it, and one Pound and a half of chocolate in it too, wrapt up in a Piece of Brown Paper and a New Cotton and Linnen Shirt and a New milk cheese wrapt up in it which weighed 5 Pounds, a pair of White Stockings, and pair of blue stockings, a Bag of Plumbs, a Bag with 3 Pounds and a half sugar in it, a Pair of Boots, a Cap, a powder horn, 4 sheets of Paper Roll'd up in a Piece of Brown Paper and four Quills in it, a brown paper with 2 pieces of Soap in it, 1 great pin, 4 small ones, 1 Brown thread needle and 1 worsted darning needle, 1 ball of white yarn, 1 ball of Blue yarn, Some Strings, Some Thread, some Sealing Wax, a Snuff box full of snuff, a Pewter Basin, a Wooden Plates, a Spoon, a fork a jack knife, a pen knife a pair of knee buckles, a Pocket-Book and case to it, a Small tooth comb, an ink-horn with four pens in it, a Pocket looking glass, an under-jacket, a pair of Grey Stockings, two pair of Shoes, a Striped Shirt, a pair of Long Trowsers, a hat, two handkerchiefs, a pair of Shoe Buckles, a pair of garters, a pack to Carry my things in, Some Bread, a pair of arm-strings, a pair of Leather Breeches, a pair of Cloth Breeches, a Leather Strap, a Cod Line, a frock, some tow.

I have here set Down, not Only my Pack & things in it, but even my Cloaths and things that I wear, Besides the things in my Pockets that I Carry & other things."

The Revolutionary War Diary of Ezra Tilden, Stoughton Historical Society.



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## CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Ezra Tilden wrote this account of all the items in his knapsack? Why might this list be useful to him later?
2. What three things do you think Ezra Tilden will find most useful on his journey? Explain why.
3. What things do you think Ezra Tilden will find least useful on his journey? Explain why.
4. If you were in Ezra Tilden's shoes, and could only carry with you the items on this list, what item would you miss the most, and why?
5. If you had to walk more than 200 miles from Stoughton, Massachusetts to Ticonderoga, New York, what would you bring? Write a list of items, but keep in mind, you may need to carry all of these on your back.
6. Do you think that Ezra Tilden has enough clothing with him? Why or why not?
7. Looking at the list of other items in his pack, why do you think Ezra Tilden brought white and blue yarn?
8. What do you think would be the most difficult aspect of a 200 mile march to Fort Ticonderoga for you?