

# 1759 BATTLE ON SNOWSHOES FRENCH ARMY COLONIAL REGULARS GUIDELINES



One hundred *Troupe de la Marine* were part of the 400-man winter guard at Carillon on March 7, 1759, when Rogers' Rangers ambushed their wood cutting party across frozen Lake Champlain. The Canadian colonial *Troupe de la Marine* in the detachment had their regulation uniforms issued to them by the colony through the French naval ministry. The uniform coat or *habit* was to be issued every three years. Annually, each man was to receive a *veste*, breeches, a pair of stockings, a hat, two pairs of shoes, two shirts, two cravats, as well as all, "the ordinary items that compose the small clothing furnished for this Colony." During 1758 the British ships in the mouth of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean captured clothing intended for French *Troupe de la Marine* and *Troupe de Terre* alike. A British May 31, 1758 sale of captured French goods, "taken by his Majesty's Ships of War," included clothing intended for the *Troupe de la Marine* in Canada.

"1772 Pair Soldiers blue Stockings," matching the regulation for the *Troupe de la Marine*, were listed among, "1126 Soldiers Waistcoats, 1775 Pair Soldiers Breeches, 1772 Pair Soldiers blue Stockings, 4041 Pair Soldiers Shoes, 2707 Soldiers Dowlas Shirts, 3128 Soldiers Canvas Shirts...6430 Soldiers Linen Stocks, 1651 Solders Hats with broad Tinsel Lace, 365 Soldiers Hats plain, 44 Pair Linen Spatterdashers."

Yet despite the loss of clothing and equipment on the high-seas, some stock of Native American trade goods remained in Canada. These trade goods were the basis of the, "the ordinary items that compose the small clothing furnished for this Colony." An anonymous list of supplies from French Army Archives in 1756 records the nature of these additional clothing items so necessary for service in Canada.

Equipment for a soldier for the campaign during the summer months.

- "1 Blanket
- 1 Capote
- 1 Bonnet (*tuque*)
- 2 Cotton Shirts
- 1 Pair of *Mitasses* (leggings)
- 2 Skeins of Thread
- 6 Needles
- 1 Awl

1759 Battle on Snowshoes French Army  
Colonial Regulars Guidelines

1 Steel Striker  
6 Gun Flints  
1 Comb  
1 Gun Worm  
2 pots of Brandy for the Campaign  
1 Pair of Souliers Tannes (Souliers de beouf)  
1 Pound of Tobacco per Month"

Issued for soldiers employed in winter expeditions.

"2 Pairs of Chaussons (moccasin liners)  
1 Gilet  
Nippes for the mocassins  
1 Deerskin -to make moccasins in the manner of native warriors.  
1 Tumpline  
1 Toboggan  
1 Pair of Snowshoes  
1 Sealskin-to cover rations on the toboggan.  
1 Tarp for 4 men for the tent.  
1 Cannoniere (artillery tent) per 10 soldiers."



Stores at Fort Carillon by October 1757 show a good supply of clothing stores going into the winter of 1757-58. Moccasins were in good supply at the Fort with a total of 15 hogshead barrels full of them. These were matched by a reserve of 84 pairs of usable snowshoes. Likewise, in October 1757 there were 158 capots, 109 pairs of wool leggings, and 229 blankets on hand. How much of these goods were on hand by the end of 1758 is unknown, but *Troupe de la Marine* had access to this stock along with their French Army compatriots.

It is worth noting the number of German-speaking soldiers among the *Troupe de la Marine* at Carillon. Back on July 25, 1757 Aide de Camp, Antoine de Bougainville noted in his journal, "Today there arrived three officers and 150 men, recruits drawn from the regiment of *Volontaires Etrangers*, and intended to fill up companies of La Marine." Captain Maures de Malartic of the Bearn Regiment, noted the same day the, "*Volontaires Etrangers* who will form new colony companies." Whether drafted from the *Volontaires Etrangers*, or recruited by the Naval Ministry in Alsace or Lorraine, German and German-speaking recruits within the *Troupe de la Marine* appeared frequently thereafter. "Petrus Claudius Beleu a Serjeant of the marine Company... [en]listed in Fisher's Corps," was captured by Rogers' Ranger at Carillon on December 23, 1758. Johann Christian Fisher was famous as the commander of France's first chasseur corps, and also the commander of the *Volontaires Etrangers*. "six Deserters of the Marine came in all Germans..." were reported by Brigadier General Frederic Haldimand at the Siege of Oswego in 1759. "Hennery Young a German born near the Rine..." was another *Volontaires Etrangers* recruit, captured from the colony's *Troupe de la Marine* at Fort La Presentation in August 1759. Beyond the German language spoken by many of these soldiers,



those from the *Volontaires Etrangers* had their distinctive uniform with green veste and facings in 1757. With supply challenges and *habit* issued on the 3-year cycle, some of these uniform garments may have been tucked away in their *gran havresacs* even by the winter of 1758-59.

## Shirts

**Best:** Hand-stitched white or blue-and-white striped linen or correct period cotton shirt with narrow band cuffs made for sleeve buttons (cuff links).

**Acceptable:** White or blue and white striped linen or correct period cotton shirt with narrow band cuffs with thread buttons or made for sleeve buttons (cuff links) with minor visible machine-stitching.

**Discouraged:** Checked, striped linen, or wool shirts.

**Unacceptable:** Cotton calico or plaid shirts.

## Neckwear

**Best:** Black wool crepe or silk cravats.

**Acceptable:** Linen or cotton neckerchief.

**Unacceptable:** Leather neck-stocks, wool scarves.

## Hats and Caps

**Best:** Knit red yarn *bonnet* or *tuque*.

**Acceptable:** Soldiers' *chapeau* bound in faux gold lace worn in and around the barracks.

**Unacceptable:** Fur cap, voyageur cap.





### **Vestes**

**Best:** Hand-finished and well-fit, sleeved veste made of blue tricot or serge, lined in serge, with brass domed rimmed buttons.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit sleeved veste made of blue woolen cloth with minor visible machine stitching.

**Unacceptable:** Extremely long or baggy vestes or modern upholstery materials.

### **Gilets**

**Best:** Hand-finished well-fit, square-cut *gilet* made of red, blue, or white wool cloth, made without sleeves, with cloth covered buttons.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit square-cut *gilet* made of red, blue, or white wool cloth, with minor visible machine stitching.

**Unacceptable:** Extremely long or baggy *gilet* or modern upholstery materials.

### **Breeches or Culotte**

**Best:** Hand-finished and well-fit, blue tricot or serge breeches with cloth covered buttons.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit, blue woolen breeches with minor visible machine stitching.

**Discouraged:** Red, blue, or white wool breechcloths are also acceptable.

**Unacceptable:** trousers.

### **Capotes**

**Best:** Hand-finished, well fit white wool cloth capote with round cuffs and hood closing with a single button at the neck.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit white wool white, drab, or grey capote with minor visible machine stitching.

**Discouraged:** Capotes with facing colored cuffs. Blanket coats or capotes from a white-bodied, blue or red striped blanket.

**Unacceptable:** 19<sup>th</sup> century trapper blanket coats; Blanket shirts.



## Legwear

**Best:** Well-fit, unadorned blue, red, or white wool *mitasse* with plain wool or Native garters.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit white linen gaiters small black leather buttons and leather garters worn in and around the barracks.

**Unacceptable:** Buckskin leggings, gaiters, or baggy wool leggings.



## Shoes

**Best:** Vamp or pucker-toe styled *Soulier Savage* or moccasins.

**Acceptable:** *Soulier du beouf* or buckled shoes.

**Unacceptable:** Modern shoes, boots, or Dyer, Arrow, Minnetonka moccasins, Shoepacks, half-boots or high-lows.

## Cold Weather Protection

**Best:** Blue, red, or white wool *mitaines*.

**Unacceptable:** Modern gloves or mittens.

**Habit-** Optional for wear around the Barracks

**Best:** Hand-finished, well-fit, *Habit* of white wool cloth, with blue regiment facings, regimental shaped pocket flaps, blue serge lining, and domed-rimmed brass buttons.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit, *Habit* of white wool cloth, with blue regimental facings, blue serge lining, with minor visible machine stitching, or no *Habit*.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.

## Arms

**Best:** French Military Muskets of 1728 or similar pattern, fitted for a bayonet, with a red Russia leather sling.

**Discouraged:** British arms, Anglo-American fowlers.

**Unacceptable:** Canoe guns, Blunderbusses, rifles.

## Side Arms

**Best:** Older Pattern *Epee d'Soldat* carried addition to a bayonet in the waist belt.

**Acceptable:** Bayonet only carried in a white buff soldiers' waistbelt.

**Discouraged:** *Petite Hache* or tomahawk.

## Cartridge Pouch

**Best:** Red Russia leather *gargousier* carried on buff waistbelt. Leather *pulverin* or powder *corne* carried on a narrow buff leather shoulder strap.

**Acceptable:** Similar style *gargousie*, no *pulverin* or *corne*.

**Unacceptable:** Anything Else.

## Canteen

**Best:** Tin *bidon*, or gourd slung over the shoulder on a hemp cord or leather thong.

**Acceptable:** Ceramic, glass canteen, slung over the shoulder on a hemp cord or leather thong.

**Unacceptable:** Wooden cheese-box canteens, British tin canteens.



## Knapsacks and Tumplines

**Best:** Gran *haversacks* of linen canvas, slung on a buff or red Russia leather strap.

**Acceptable:** Finger woven or webbing tumplines.

**Unacceptable:** Two-strap knapsacks, Anglo-American *haversacks*.

## Blanket

**Best:** 3-Point blankets. Bear skins hides may also be used.

**Acceptable:** Check, Dutch, or rose plain white or Hudson Bay blankets.

**Unacceptable:** Civil War grey blankets modern olive drab blankets.