

1759 BATTLE ON SNOWSHOES FRENCH ARMY REGULARS GUIDELINES



Captain de Hebecourt of the La Reine Regiment, commanded Fort Carillon and its 400-man winter guard on March 7, 1759 when Rogers' Rangers ambushed their wood cutting party across frozen Lake Champlain. Back on November 5, 1758 the Marquis de Montcalm left Carillon for winter quarters with his battalions of French Army soldiers. Three hundred French Army soldiers remained as the majority of the guard, drawn from Berry, LaReine, Languedoc, La, Sarre, Royal Roussillon, Guyenne, and Bearn. The exact proportion of each battalion's contribution is currently unknown, but even as late as November 1, 1759, General Bourlemaque, reported still having, "one hundred and fifty soldiers detached from the other five battalions..." under his command, in addition to LaReine and two battalions of Berry. The good luck of September 1757, when French supply ships slipped past the British blockade of Canada, getting French soldiers their new uniforms was not repeated in 1758. On October 12, 1758 Aide de Camp, Antoine de Bougainville, noted the arrival of a courier from Quebec. The courier reported that the 50-gun ship *Aigle* ran aground on August 8 and, "This ship carried recruits, provisions, munitions, and the clothing for our battalions." Though new uniforms from France did not reach French soldiers guarding Carillon in the winter of 1758-59, stocks of the Native American trade goods in Canada had not yet been depleted within the country. Unfortunately, any scarcity of supplies was compounded by the speculation of merchants, who continually raised prices in response to shortages. French infantry soldiers were supposed to receive an annual allotment of clothing and equipment from the Colony of Canada. Aide Major, Chevalier de la Pause of the Guyenne Regiment recorded the *State of the Equipment which was Issued at the Beginning of the 1757 Campaign*. Per man this allotment amounted to:



- "1 Blanket
- 2 Shirts
- 1 Pair of Breeches and Drawers
- 1 Capote
- 1 Blanket
- 1 Bonnet (tuque)
- 1 Pair of Mitasse (leggings)
- 1 Knife
- 1 Comb
- 1 Awl

1759 Battle on Snowshoes French Army Regulars Guidelines

1 Steel Striker
6 Gun Flints
6 Needles
2 Skeins of Thread
1 Gun Worm
2 Pair of Souliers Tannes (*Souliers de beouf*) for 2 months.
1 Pair of French Shoes
1 Lock Cover"

French soldiers likely soldiered on with equipment from 1757, when items were unavailable in 1758. The last complete inventory of stores at Fort Carillon was in October 1757, but included a good supply of winter clothing and equipment going into the winter of 1758. 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 of 1757 there were 158 capots, 109 pairs of wool leggings, and 229 blankets on hand. The issuance of these items is corroborated by other French Army officers like Guillaume Meriten de Pradals, of the La Sarre Regiment. He listed on June 4, 1756:

*"Winter campaign:
One capote,
One pair of mittens,
Two pairs of mitasse which are of heavy woolen stuff.
For snow one pair of snowshoes,
One sealskin for sleeping, the soldiers,
A bearskin for us in the winter."*

As supplies dwindled in the winter of 1758-59, French regular army soldiers at Carillon continued to serve with what Canadian winter clothing and equipment was available, and their old issuances from better campaign seasons in the past.

Shirts

Best: Hand-stitched white linen or hemp sheeting 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 bunting neck-stocks with brass buckles.

Acceptable: Black wool crepe or silk cravats. Linen or cotton neckerchief.

Unacceptable: Leather neck-stocks, wool scarves.

Vestes

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

Acceptable: Well fitted sleeved *veste* made of blue or red 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, white tricot or serge breeches with cloth covered buttons. Underneath, hand-finished unbleached linen under breeches.

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

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

Unacceptable: trousers.

Capote

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.



1759 Battle on Snowshoes French Army
Regulars Guidelines

Unacceptable: *Capote* with facing colored cuffs. Blanket coats or *capote* from a white-bodied, blue or red striped blanket. 19th century trapper blanket coats; Blanket shirts.

Legwear

Best: Well-fit, unadorned white, blue, purple, or red 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.

Hats and Caps

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

Acceptable: *Bonnet de police* or fatigue cap. Soldiers' *chapeau* bound in faux gold or silver lace worn in and around the barracks.

Unacceptable: Fur cap, *voyageur* cap.



Footwear

Best: Pucker-toe styled *Soulier Savage* or moccasins.

Acceptable: *Soulier du beuf* or buckled shoes.

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

Mittens

Best: White, blue, grey, purple or red wool cloth *mitaines*.

Acceptable: White, blue, grey, purple or red knit 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 or red cloth regimental collars and cuffs, regimental shaped pocket flaps, white serge lining, and domed-rimmed brass or white metal buttons.

1759 Battle on Snowshoes French Army Regulars Guidelines

Acceptable: Well-fit, *Habit* of white wool cloth, with blue or red regimental collars and cuffs, white or 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: French Army *Epee d'Soldat* carried in addition to a bayonet in the waist belt.

Acceptable: Older pattern *Epee d' Soldat* or Bayonet only carried in a white buff soldiers' waistbelt.

Unacceptable: *Casse tete* or tomahawk.

Cartridge Pouch

Best: Red or Russia leather *demi-giberne* with a buff leather strap, with leather *pulverin* or powder *corne*.

Acceptable: Similar style demi-gibernes, no pulverin or corne.

Unacceptable: Anything Else.

Canteen

Best: Gourd *bidon* 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 *haversacs* of linen canvas, slung on a buff leather strap.

Acceptable: Finger woven, leather, 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.

