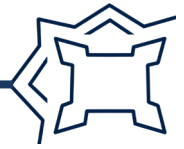


# 1759 SIEGE OF CARILLON BRITISH LIGHT INFANTRY GUIDELINES



Light infantry were in the van of General Amherst's Army during the advance down Lake George, the landing, and subsequent skirmishing with French pickets up to the Heights of Carillon. This light infantry was composed of a battalion of light companies created within each of the British regular battalions and the entire 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, or Gage's Light-Armed Infantry. They provided an effective screen for the siege of Fort Carillon, preventing many of the missteps of previous British campaigns.

## Gage's Light Armed Infantry

At the close of 1757, Lord Loudoun was preparing to raise a new regiment in the colonies to serve as a hybrid between a ranger corps and a regular regiment. As early as December of 1757, several officers were given commissions to serve in the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, Light-Armed infantry. These "Lather caps", 500 men strong, were initially commanded by Colonel Thomas Gage. By 1759, Major Henry Gladwin commanded the five companies of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot at the head of General Amherst's Army.

The clothing and equipment of Gage's men were a mix of locally procured items as well as pieces from His Majesty's stores. On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1757 Lord Loudoun proposed that the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment should receive:

*"540 Suits of clothing Coat Westcoat,  
Pair of breeches leggins and making.*

*540 Firelocks, cutting & finishing*

*540 Hachets with handles*

*540 Knives with scabbards*

*540 pairs of shoes*

*540 pairs of stockings or 2 pair of  
socks*

*540 flannel shirts*

*540 shot bags*

*540 horns*

*540 caps."*

Many accounts of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment agreed about the distinctive nature of their uniforms. Adjutant General Robert Napier, in a November 6, 1758 letter, described the clothing as "dark brown short coats" with "black buttons." On January 6, 1759 Captain



Allan Campbell wrote to John Campbell describing the previous year of 1758:

*"He's [George Campbell] now second oldest Lieut in General Gage's Regt of light arm'd infantry...I have advanced him Twenty Guineas for which he gave me a Bill on you. I hope you'll not Disapprove of my conduct for doing it, not blame him for running so much short, when I explain to you the cause of it; its true he came over very well Rigged out, but his changing Corps put him under the necessity of Buying new Regimentals, as these Differ in Colours from the rest of the Army, being Brown."*



In January 1759, General Amherst wrote of recruiting for the 80<sup>th</sup>, noting that, "Brigadier General Gage's light infantry who wanted a great many men are completed, the Yankees love dearly a brown coat." In March 1759, from 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment Quartermaster John Hall, he ordered 525 uniforms "such as those last Year...nigh as the same Colour as could be got." Thomas Davies' 1764, *A View of the Lines at Lake George*, included a soldier of 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment in the foreground of the 1759 British camp. A plumed black leather cap, topped off the all brown uniform with a short coat, called for at the raising of this new regiment in 1757. The 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment wore leggings from their initial raising, and continued to do so along with the rest of the British Army. An April 16, 1759 deserter advertisement in *the New York Mercury*, included "Daniel McManus," whose dress included, "blue Cloth Leggings," as did "Edward Norman."

The 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment was initially armed with the King's Arms pulled from stores. The original December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1757 proposal for raising the regiment included, "540 firelocks, cutting & finishing." These King's Arms were issued as stands of arms, including a cartridge box, bayonet, scabbard, frog, and black leather sling. On June 12, 1758 the orderly book of 55<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot Captain Alexander Money Penny recorded "Each Regt to receive ten riffled pieces from the store, & to return the like number of firelocks for them." On May 5, 1759, General Amherst ordered Ordinance Comptroller James Furnis to issue 1,228 cavalry carbines to light infantry companies of Regular Regiments and to Gage's Lightly-Armed Infantry. Initially these cavalry carbines had no provision for bayonet, being made for British regiments of Horse. By June 20, 1759, bayonets were issued to Gage's Lightly-Armed Infantry, the carbines having had the stocks cut back and barrels fitted for bayonets.





## Caps

**Best:** Leather light infantry cap styled after the Thomas Davies painting of the 1759 Lake George camp.

**Acceptable:** Felt cap styled like the light caps.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.

## Shirts

**Best:** Hand-stitched white or blue & white checked linen shirt with short collar (under two and a half inches) narrow band cuffs with thread Dorset buttons or made for sleeve buttons (cuff links). Flannel shirts described in Gage's proposal.

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

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



## Neckwear

**Best:** Hand-stitched white linen neck stocks.

**Acceptable:** Machine-hemmed linen rollers, silk or cotton neckerchiefs.

**Unacceptable:** Military horsehair or leather neck stocks.

## Jackets and Waistcoats

**Best:** Hand-finished, well-fit brown waistcoat with black painted pewter buttons with or without sleeves.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit, brown waistcoat with black painted pewter buttons with or without sleeves with minor visible machine stitching.

**Unacceptable:** Cotton canvas, upholstery fabric waistcoats, extremely long or baggy waistcoats.

## Breeches

**Best:** Hand-finished, well-fit brown regimental breeches, with buttoned or tied knee bands.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit brown regimental breeches with buckled, buttoned or tied knee bands with minor visible machine stitching.

**Unacceptable:** Fringed trousers, baggy breeches.

## Coats

**Best:** Hand-finished, well-fit, brown Light Infantry coats, unlaced, short, without collar and black painted pewter buttons.

**Acceptable:** Well-fit, brown Light Infantry coats, unlaced, short, without collar and black painted pewter buttons, with little visible machine stitching.

**Unacceptable:** Hunting shirts, Blanket shirts, Fur skins.



## Legwear

**Best:** Well-fit wool British army leggings of blue woolen cloth. Garters made of the same material.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.

## Footwear

**Best:** Common soldiers' shoes of black waxed leather, closed with brass shoe buckles.

**Discouraged:** Half-boots or moccasins.

**Unacceptable:** Officer's boots on non-officers; Dyer, Arrow, Minnetonka moccasins, Shoepacks

## Cartridge Boxes

**Best:** Nine or Twelve-Round Government accoutrement set with box & belt.

**Acceptable:** 18-Round Government accoutrement set.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else

## Shot Bag

**Best:** Plain leather small shot bag on a narrow leather shoulder strap.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.

## Powder Horns

**Best:** Plain, empty, powder horns with narrow leather or hemp straps.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.



## Arms

**Best:** 1748 Artillery Carbine or modified 1744 Pattern Horse Carbine.

**Acceptable:** Long land pattern muskets cut down to 42" browned barrel or 1758 German Contract Rifle (Maximum 2 per company).

**Discouraged:** Short Land pattern muskets.

**Unacceptable:** Canoe gun, blunderbuss, long rifles.

## Sidearms

**Best:** Bayonet and British camp ax.

**Acceptable:** Bayonet only.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.

## Tumplines

**Best:** Hemp webbing tumpline.

**Acceptable:** Leather tumpline or none.

**Unacceptable:** Anything else.



## Haversack

**Best:** British Stamped GR osnaburg haversack.

**Acceptable:** Plain osnaburg haversack.

## Canteens

**Best:** Kidney-shaped tinned-iron British army canteen on a hemp cord.

**Acceptable:** Similar tinned-iron canteens.

**Unacceptable:** Anything Else

## Blankets

**Best:** British Army Blankets.

**Acceptable:** 2-Point or 3-Point blankets, checked, Dutch, or Rose blankets, plain white or Hudson Bay blankets.

**Unacceptable:** Civil War grey blankets.

## British Light Companies

After various experiments with creating light infantry companies in British Regular regiments in 1758, General Amherst ordered a uniform practice for clothing and arming select soldiers for this service. Wherever possible, light infantry dress was to be made out of their existing clothing and equipment. General Orders from Albany on February 26, 1759, within the orderly book of 55<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot Captain Alexander Money Penny, began the process of altering the clothing for light infantry for the upcoming campaign.

*"The Inniskilling Regt. Lascelles, & Abercrombie's to send each a man of their Light Infantry to New York that they may be dress'd by a man of Webbs, who is there. Capt. Mirrie will dress a man of the Royals in the like manner to be sent to Albany.*

*The Commanding Officers will order their leggings of what colour they please. The Barrells of the Firelocks of the Light Infantry must all be made blue or brown, to take off the glittering; And the Coats of the light infantry may be quite plain, or with the Facings of the Regt., as the Commanding Officers like best. The less they are seen in the Woods the better."*

Wherever possible, light infantry dress was to be made out of their existing clothing and equipment, and by the beginning of the campaign season, these modifications had been fully codified. In May 1759, General James Wolfe explained in detail, the practice instituted by General Amherst:

*"The following order for the dress of the light infantry, as approved by his Excellency General Amhurst; Major-General Wolfe desires the same may be exactly conformed to by the light troops under his command; the sleeves of the coat are put on the waistcoat, and instead of coat sleeves he has two wings like the Grenadiers, but fuller; and a round slope reaching about half-way down his arm; which makes his coat of no encumbrance to him, but can be slipt off with pleasure; he has no lace, but the lapels remain; besides the usual pockets, he has two not quite so high as his breast, made of leather, for ball and flints; and a flap of red cloth on the inside, which secures the ball from rolling out, if he should fall. His knapsack is carried very high between his shoulders, and is fastened with a strap of web over his shoulder, as the Indians carry their pack. His cartouch box hangs under his arm on the left side, slung with a leathern strap; and his horn under the other arm on the right, hanging by a narrower web than that used for his knapsack; his canteen down his back, under his knapsack, and covered with cloth, he has a rough case for his tomahawk with a*





*button, and it hangs on a leathern sling down his side, like a hanger, between his coat and waistcoat, no bayonet, his leggins have leathern straps under his shoes, like spatterdashers; his hat is made into a cap with a flap and a button and with as much black cloth added as will come under his chin and keep him warm when he lies down; it hooks in the front and is made like the old velvet caps in England."*



As with Gage's Lightly-Armed Infantry, the light infantry companies of the British Regular Regiments received their proportion of the 1,228 cavalry carbines issued by a May 5, 1759, General Amherst order to Ordinance Comptroller James Furnis. By June 20, 1759, the carbines had the stocks cut back and the barrels fitted for bayonets. Initially some Light Infantry received captured French muskets, carrying them through the campaign at Ticonderoga. General Orders on August 7, 1759 at Crown Point ordered that, "The Light Infantry to change the Firelocks that they received at the Train and to take Carabines in their Room." The Light Infantry retained these carbines through the end of the 1759 campaign even as they received their annual clothing in its unmodified regulation form, as General Orders at Crown Point on November 22, 1759 noted, "The men are to keep their carbines, powder boxes and are to wear their new clothing but not to cut it into the Light Infantry dress until further orders."