

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS REFERENCE FORM

1. UNIT: Capt. Abraham Kellar's Comp., Illinois Reg't of Virginia State Line

Crown: Line: Loyalist line: Loyalist militia:

Congress: Line: State line: Militia:

2. GENERAL AREA OF ORIGIN OR RECRUITMENT: Predominantly from Dunmore County (Upper Shenandoah Valley), Virginia and Western Counties of Virginia and Pennsylvania - Fort Pitt area, Ohio / Kentucky settlements, and French villages in the Wabash and Mississippi River valleys

Town: Rural: Frontier:

3. ETHNICITY (NATIONALITIES) OF MEMBERS OF ORIGINAL UNIT:

English: Scotch: Irish: French: German:

Other (list): Scotch-Irish

4. GEOGRAPHY COVERED ON CAMPAIGNS DURING REVOLUTION:

Upper Canada: Northern Colonies: Northern Frontier:

Lower Canada: Middle Colonies: Ohio Frontier:

Louisiana: Southern Colonies: Southern Frontier:

5. DURATION OF UNIT PARTICIPATION IN REVOLUTIONARY WAR: From- December 1778
To- December 1781

6. PERIOD OF UNIT EXISTENCE PORTRAYED BY RECREATED UNIT: From- January 1780
To- _____
(limited to one 30-day period)

7. GEOGRAPHY COVERED BY THE UNIT TO THE END OF THE PERIOD OF PORTRAYAL: Ohio River Valley Country, Wabash River Valley, Mid-Mississippi River Valley, Kentucky and Virginia. The unit was specific at Ft. Patrick Henry at Vincennes on the Wabash river (Indiana).

8. GENERAL UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT CONDITION BASED ON CONDITIONS OF SUPPLY, CAMPAIGN UNIT DISCIPLINE: Accoutrements are worn but maintained. Uniforms are a mixture of old and new as they were being made up during January and completed by the end of February. Winter Quarters Conditions.

9. HEADGEAR:

Military cocked: Civilian cocked: Civilian tricorne: Rifleman's:

Grenadier helmet: Leather (light infantry type) helmet: Knit cap:

Slouch: Highland bonnet: Fatigue cap: Canadian:

Other (list): _____

9. HEADGEAR: Military Cocked Hat, Fatigue Cap and Knit Cap

Military cocked hat

The military cocked hat is based upon issue from Spanish supplies. As the Spanish were wearing black hats, we presume this to be the color. (1)
We believe the Spanish pattern was a French style utilizing hooks and eyes to cock the hat. (2, 6)

The Louisiana Regiment (which would likely have used the same supplies) had white binding on the brim, thus we will use white binding on our hat brims until more specific documentation is obtained. (2)

We have no information as to the color of the cockade, therefore, we will use the simple black cockade that was common to the Crown and Continental Forces. (3,4)

The button used will be the 1780 brass button issue. (5)

1. GRCP
2. SLR
3. PJT
4. PCWP
5. NA 35319
6. GRCA, doc. D216, pgs. 380-381

Fatigue Cap

This item is a matter of supposition based upon (1) common usage of fatigue caps in all armies of the period to preserve the cocked hat, (2) availability of fabric, (3) scarcity of hats (issue of hats appears adequate, but no surplus appears in evidence)

We will use an early pattern fatigue cap which has a crown in the coat base color which folds over, a "turn-up" of at least 1 and a half inches around the base of the hat in the facing color with a vertical opening in that band at the back of the head, with an "occasional falling cape to defend and cover the neck" which may be tucked up into the body of the hat, and a tassel the color of the base coat color. This cap is shown in early paintings and referenced in period literature. (1,2,3,4)

- 1.LD 1767
- 2 .MF
3. MC
4. BC

Knit Cap

The knit cap serves the same function as the above mentioned Fatigue Cap. The Knit Cap was common amongst the French inhabitants.

10. COAT: Military Issue Regimental, Overshirt

Military Issue Regimental - Blue Coat, blue faced white, short coat (mid-thigh length), white turnbacks, white collar, white cuffs, and white lapels.

We will use varying shades of blue in our coats due to several factors (i.e. old vs. new coats, sun-fading, variations in dye lots).

The length of our coats is based on earlier uniform issues where it was referred to as a jacote (jacket) and the amount of cloth issued (3 1/2 yds.). Officers wore full skirted coats to just above the knee, also based on the amount of cloth issued (4 1/2 yds.). (1,2,6)

The cut is based on the Tilghman coat with an 11 button facing, 3 button cuff, and 3 button pocket flap. (3,4,5)

The button used will be the 1780 brass button issue. (2)

1. EGV
2. NA 35319
3. TU
4. GWU
5. UCA
6. NA 35318

Overshirt

We use a large shirt dyed any other color than white as an outer-garment for fatigue details and for patrols, campaigns, carrying messages between posts, etc. (where the regimental coat could be damaged or make the soldiers "too visible"). (1,2)

We also theorize that the wearing of different color outer-garments would be another way that the master propagandist George Rogers Clark could make his men appear more numerous.

The rationale for this use is (1) the common use of such shirts for work details in armies of the period, (2) the erratic supply situation making regimental coats quite valuable, (3) the common issuance of shirts and leggings to parties leaving Fort Patrick Henry. (2)

1. WGW, vol.18, pg. 59; vol. 21, pg. 480; vol.24, pgs. 448 & 458
2. GRCP

11. WESKIT (Waistcoat)

White Weskit of the typical cut

Wool front, fustian back, nine brass buttons with three at each pocket flap. (1, 2, 4, 5, 6)

White flannel was issued. The term flannel in the 18th century generally refers to woolen cloth. Fustian was a common lining fabric. (1, 2, 3, 5, 6)

The button used will be the 1780 brass button issue. (1)

1. NA 35319
2. NA 34314
3. TIA
4. CMC
5. TU
6. NA35318

12. FOOTWEAR

Shoes, Moccasins, and Boots (officers only)

Shoes were issued to the unit at erratic times. (1, 2, 4)

Conditions of supply dictated specifically that some moccasins be used, as shoes were often unavailable. (1, 3)

Some boots were available to officers. (1, 2, 5)

1. GRCP
2. GRCA, doc. 208, pg. 368
3. IHC II
4. GRCA, doc. D216, pgs. 380-381
5. EU, pg. 248

13. LEGWEAR

White Overalls, Blue Leggings, Knee Britches (Officers only)

Overalls are the issue legwear. (1, 2, 3, 4)

We will use wool or linen because (1) not all of the members of the company received their uniforms at the same time as indicated by currently reviewed documents, (2) as we know that linen was available and issued in quantity to the officers and in small quantity to various enlisted men, and (3) because there are indications that there may have been a distinct summer and winter issue of uniforms and this issue is not fully clarified. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Records indicate that leggings of "strouding" (primarily blue) were issued to men going "on express" or "on campaign". (7, 8)

Issue records indicate that Officers would have had knee britches. (2, 3, 4, 9)

1. EGV
2. NA 35319
3. NA 34314
4. NA 35318
5. UCA, pg. 23
6. BC, pg.53
7. GRCP
8. WHE
9. CMC

14. STOCKINGS

No specific documentation

Natural colors acceptable until specific research is available. (1, 2, 3, 4)

1. WGW, vols. 18, 19, 21 & 25
2. UCA, pgs. 37-40
3. RPC, pgs. 125-153
4. GRCA, doc. D216, pgs. 380-381

15. Garters

No specific documentation

Garters will be of black leather with brass buckles or of woven tape

1. GRCA, doc. D 216, pgs. 380-381
2. RPC, pgs. 238-241
3. UCA, pg.47
4. CEAR, pg. 53

16. SHIRT

White or Check Linen

At least two shirts were issued to every soldier. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

1. EGV
2. NA 35318
3. GRCP
4. RPC
5. CMC
6. GRCA, doc.D216, pg. 380-381

17. Neckwear

No specific documentation

We presume that some form of neckwear would have been used. We have chosen to allow our soldiers some latitude here, and will allow either a Black Neckstock (buckled or tied) or a Black silk Neckerchief, based on the common usages of the period. (1,2,3,4)

1. PJT
2. PCWP
3. ECC
4. RPC

18. CAPOTE OR CLOAK: Capotes, Watch Cloaks, French "Cassocks", "Frontier Surtout"

Capotes, Watch Cloaks, French "Cassocks"

No specific research is available on the exact nature of cloaks or capotes issued, except for the one entry regarding the "cassocks" borrowed from the inhabitants of Prairie du Rocher. This unique style of capote would be appropriate based on the French in the unit as well as proximity to the French. We presume that some such cloaks and capotes would have been necessary. Until we have specific research we will use the standard patterns of capote and cloak. (1, 2, 3, 4)

1. WHE, vol. 1, pg. 514
2. CMC, pgs. 89-90; pg. 94, fig.II
3. UAR, plate140
4. EAR, pgs.22-24

"Frontier Surtout"

We use a dark-dyed waterproofed shirt cut down the front in the fashion of a coat with the cuffs removed to allow insertion of the musket butt and lock up the sleeve. This is a frontier invention to keep the frontiersmen, his gear, and musket lock dry. This is referenced and described in a book written after the Indian Wars of 1763 and 1764. (1, 2)

1. SNA

Greatcoat

No specific documentation. Due to the common usage of this garment we assume some would be present. Coat is of common construction. (1, 2, 3)

1. CMC, pg. 95, fig. II
2. RPC, pgs. 180-182
3. ECC, pg. 69

19. BAGS AND SUCH

No specific documentation

As there is no documentation available at this time for specific types of packs or haversacks issued to the unit, we have chosen to use as our main pack the '76 new invented haversack. (1, 2)

At present we have not set a standard for haversacks, so any documentable pattern is acceptable. (3, 4, 5)

1. BCS, pg. 144
2. CEAR, pgs. 169-170
3. BCS, pg. 144
4. CEAR, pg. 169-170
5. FMAR, pg. 35

20. CARTRIDGE BOXES: Shoulder Box, Belly Box, Shot Pouch, Powder Horn, Issue, Scrounged

Issue Boxes

Standard issue box is a Spanish Regiment shoulder box converted to a belly box by discarding the shoulder strap and adding belt loops. (1, 2, 3)

The Spanish Louisiana Regiment shoulder box flap had the crest of Charles III of Spain embossed into it and painted red. (1, 2, 3)

The leather of the box was undyed but appears brown due to age and preservative oil. (1, 2, 3)

1. GRCP
2. SLR
3. SMW

"Scrounged" Boxes and Pouches

We have chosen to use the Charles III belly box as the standard issue for the unit, but we also use a limited number of shoulder boxes and black flap belly boxes to show the variety available. (1, 2, 3)

Because the conditions of supply were erratic and because it is logical to

assume that some number of the soldiers on enlistment had some other device for carrying powder and shot which were practical for supplemental carriage of ammunition. (1, 2, 3, 13)

Due to the desirability of carrying as much ammunition on the frontier as is practical, we believe that there would be "scrounged" cartridge boxes and shot pouches and powder horns in evidence. These various boxes, pouches (4, 5, 6, 7) and horns (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) would be appropriate to the times and geography of the Illinois Regiment.

1. CEAR, pgs. 66-80
2. BCS, pgs. 64-69
3. BWAR, pgs. 22-29
4. FMAR, pgs. 24-26
5. CEAR, pgs. 160-161
- 6.
7. BWAR, pg. 212
8. FMAR, pgs. 27-28
9. CEAR, pgs. 148-155
- 10.
11. BWAR, pgs. 30-31
12. BCS, pgs. 70-71
13. CS

21. CANTEEN

No specific documentation

As no specific construction is evident from the research documentation available to date, we will use canteens of construction appropriate to the times and geography of the Illinois Regiment. (1, 2, 3, 4)

1. CEAR, pgs. 59-64
2. BWAR, pgs. 32-33
3. BCS, pgs. 142-143
4. WEWP, pg. 33, specifically copper

22. BAYONET/SIDEARM CARRIAGE

No specific documentation

Due to its prevalence, the majority of our men will be utilizing a shoulder carriage. In order to show the variety available due to the erratic supply situation, any documentable pattern is acceptable until specific documentation becomes available. (1, 2, 3, 4)

1. CEAR, pgs. 36-39
2. SBAR, pgs. 13, 27 & 30

3. BCS, pgs. 76-79
4. FMAR, pgs. 29-31

23. SIDEARM

Sword, Tomahawk, Bayonet, Belt Knife, Spontoon

We believe that swords would have been carried by a number of the men, as this was a common frontier custom. Swords would come into the unit as part of the soldier's personal gear. Also we presume that rank distinctions of armies of the period would be followed, with sergeants and officers carrying swords. (1, 2, 3, 16)

Tomahawks should be in evidence as common weapons and tools on the frontier. Not every soldier would have one, as these were limited issue gear. (4, 5, 6)

Bayonets were an issue item, particularly with those men who received muskets. It appears from the issue records that there were attempts to make sure every musketeer had a bayonet. (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16)

This unit was specifically identifiable by the Indians as carrying "Big Knives" or "Long Knives" (although this does not refer to the "size" of the soldier). Issue records indicate that "sculpting [sic] knives" were issued from regimental stores. As the rifleman's knife or long knife was common equipment on the frontier, we presume that these issues were made to those men who did not already have one. (12, 13, 14, 15)

Carrying of spontoons by officers is a matter of conjecture supported by extension of rank distinctions from the American army on the east coast, availability of local blacksmiths to create such an item, and availability from Spanish stores. (16, 17, 18, 19, 20)

1. SBAR, pgs.62-103
2. CEAR, pgs.252-254
3. BWAR, pgs.304-343
4. FMAR, pgs.31-32
5. SBAR, pgs.260-273
6. CEAR, pgs.24-27
7. GRCA, doc. 200, pgs. 358-360
8. CEAR, pgs.29-32
9. SBAR, pgs. 32-50
10. BWAR, pgs. 279-301
11. SMW
12. SBAR, pgs. 232-239
13. CEAR, pgs. 171-173
14. FMAR, pgs. 32-33
15. GRCA, doc. D208, pgs. 368-371
16. DWWG
17. CEAR, pg. 248
18. BCA, pgs. 98-100
19. SBAR, pgs. 192, 210-221

24. FIREARMS:

Brown Bess, Charleville, Pennsylvania Rifle, Spanish New Fusee, Pistol, Fowlers

Clark's men were recruited from areas where it would be extremely improbable that they would not have already been armed. Rather than a standard issue to all men in the unit simultaneously, it appears that issues were made from time to time to replace inadequate or unserviceable weapons. As a line company, in general, the soldiers will be armed with muskets. (1, 11)

Brown Besses would have been brought from the east, captured at Ft. Patrick Henry, or issued from stores captured on the lower Mississippi by Willings Marines or the Spanish. (2, 3, 4)

Charlevilles would have been brought from the east, purchased from the local inhabitants, brought into the unit by a local French enlistee, or captured from the French militia with Henry Hamilton. (5, 6)

Rifles of almost any description would have been brought from the east or been one of a limited number captured at Ft. Sackville. (7, 8)

Spanish fusees were issued from stores. (1, 9, 10)

Pistols, though not in evidence from regimental records, could have been brought from the east or obtained from the local inhabitants.

1. GRCA, doc. 200, pgs. 358-360
2. RCBB
3. CEAR, pg. 202
4. BWAR, pgs. 59-68
5. BWAR, pgs. 90-97
6. CEAR, pg. 203
7. FCA
8. HWAR
9. GRCA, doc. 216, pgs. 380-381
10. SMW
11. CS

25. RANK DISTINCTIONS

Sergeants

We use the rank distinctions of the American army for the period of portrayal. These include ruffled shirts, double white epaulettes, and a sword as a sidearm. (1)

Officer's (Lieutenant)

We use the rank distinctions of the American army for the period of portrayal. (1)
Uniforms - See Coat, Legwear, and Footwear.

Sidearms - See Sidearms.

Epaulettes - Silver, worn on the left shoulder as per Continental Army regulations of October 1779.

Sash - Red, conforming to military conventions of the period. (2, 3)

Gorget - Silver. (4)

1 BCS, pgs. 243-244

2 PCWP

3 PJT

4 AN 13196

26. MUSICIAN'S DISTINCTIONS

No specific documentation

Musician's carry instruments.

27. PIONEER DISTINCTIONS

No specific documentation

We find no evidence in any research materials presently available that there were any specifically designated pioneers in the Illinois Regiment.

The members of Kellar's Co'y would like to acknowledge the assistance of the members in Worthington's Co'y for generously sharing their research with us. We would like to especially thank Greg Holm, as we have "borrowed" ("plagiarized" is such an ugly word!) large sections of his work in the preceeding pages.

Unit Commander: _____

Date: _____

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- (BWAR) Battle Weapons of the American Revolution, George C. Neumann, Scurlock Publishing Co., Texarkana, TX, 1998
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- (CS) Common Sense
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- (EU) Erotica Universalis, Gilles Neret, Benedikt Taschen, Germany, 1994
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- (GRCA) The George Rogers Clark Adventure, Katherine Wagner Seinke, Polyanthos, New Orleans, LA, 1981

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(PJT) The Paintings of John Trumbull

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