

# On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – May 2009

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## Important information

Victorian Police's –  
Re-enactors Guide Booklet  
[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media\\_id=36984&status=active](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media_id=36984&status=active)

## UP COMING EVENTS



**In 2009**

### September

**Southern Cross Free Trappers  
Camp at Beaver Creek**  
19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> thru to 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Sept  
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## Three Camp Beds of George Washington

In the photo below, two variations of Washington's field beds are shown set up in a tent and ready for use.

Documentation exists for his use of both, at different times and locations.



### Washington's Stool-Bed

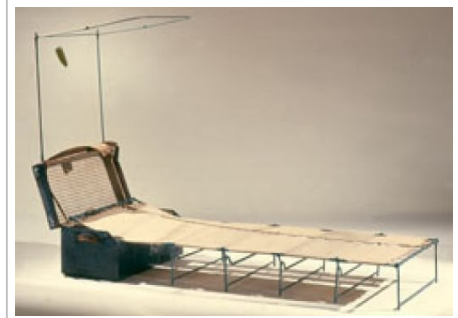
- Foreground is Stool-Bed, comprised of three separate folding stools with head, side and foot boards. Construction is oak, with hemp supports and forged iron hardware.

### Washington Folding Field Bedstead

Behind is the Folding Field Bedstead which is a remarkable feat of engineering, as the entire assembly folds neatly and stows in the rope handled pine box against the tent wall. Sturdy enough for daily use, yet delicate and refined in appearance. This is an elegant bed, suitable for high ranking officers. Gorgeous details throughout include walnut structural members, forged iron hardware, and linen privacy curtains.



George Washington's folding field bedstead in walnut wood, with hand sewn hemp canvas foundation, interpreted from multiple researched sources including observation of the original at Mt. Vernon.



### Washington's Trunk Bed

From the Henry Ford Museum.

Manufactured 1775 – 1780

From The Living History Shop

<http://www.livinghistoryshop.com/>

## George Washington's Camp Chest



**Date:** about 1776

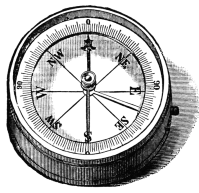
**Dimensions / Weight**

**Dimensions:** 30" H x 21.25" W x 15" D

**Physical Description:** Camp chest made of pine covered in leather. There is a green wool lining and iron hinges, facings and handles. The chest contains a cooking stove, folding pots, utensils, plates, platters, bottles, and other cooking items.

**Specific History:** One of the three camp chests know to have been owned by General George Washington.

**General History :** Washington usually slept and dined in the homes of well-to-do residents. On those occasions when he encamped with his army, the troops carried tents, a collapsible bed, folding tables, camp stools, and bags and trunks filled with equipment. Two sets of camp chests were purchased by Washington on 3 May 1776. Another set was captured from a British ship and sent to Washington in October 1778. By 1782, Washington's camp equipment was so extensive that he requested from Quartermaster Timothy Pickering two horses just to carry the load



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## **Congratulations to**

several of our club members - Jenny, Gary & Mappo who won awards at the 15<sup>th</sup> Historical Conference at Castle Mountain in NSW at Easter they took home prizes in the following competitions

1<sup>st</sup> place in the hand sewn costuming for a 18<sup>th</sup> Century fringed hunting frock

1<sup>st</sup> place for domestic furniture making for a recreation of the Oseberg Viking chair

1<sup>st</sup> place Armour making for a recreation of Amazon Leather Scale armour

1<sup>st</sup> place for the Mead section in the Brewing

And a 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Best Historic Campsite

The Historic Conference have decided to open up and to allow later time periods to attend – so you got two years to save up to the next one – you don't want to miss it – its just the best fun.

## **Rev War Recipe To make Sausages.**

TAKE three pounds of fat, and three pounds of lean pork; cut the lean into thin slices; and the fat cut as small as can be; mix fat and lean together, shred and mix them well; two ounces and a half of salt, half an ounce of pepper, thirty cloves, and three or four large blades of mace, six spoonfuls of sage, two spoonfuls of rosemary cut exceedingly fine, with three nutmegs grated; beat six eggs, and work them well together with a pint of water that has been boil'd, and is perfectly cold. If you have no herbs, slice a penny white loaf in cream, steep it all night, and work it in well with sausage-meat, with as much cream as will infuse the bread. If you put in raw water, the sausages are said not to keep so well as when it is boiled.

Source:

E. Smith, *The Compleat Housewife: ...* 15th ed. (London: Printed for R. Ware...1753; facsimile reprint by Literary Services and Production Limited, London, 1968), p. 91.

## **18<sup>th</sup> Century Fringed Hunting Shirt**



Jenny's Fringed Hunting shirt that won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Hand Sewn Costume Competition at the 15<sup>th</sup> Historical Conference – Easter 2009

### **Construction**

Hand sewn & Fringing made by hand – using a leather awl to help put out warp threads on the material

Construction time 4 days – (2 days in making the fringing and 2 days of hand sewing)

### **Material used**

Linen / cotton – a painters drop sheet brought from Bunning's hardware – the closest we could get to the type of linen used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in these Coats  
Linen thread

## **History of Hunter Fringed shirt / Frock**

1775 – 1825 main period of use  
During the second half of the 18th century a garment referred to as "a hunting shirt" began to appear in North America. The earliest and simplest form seems akin to the coarse shirts that European wagoners and farmers wore as a protective coverall.

In the years prior to the American Revolution this garment came to have a distinct American character

Several of the Independent Companies wore hunting shirts emblazoned on the breast with the motto, Liberty or Death, and several of the early colonial armies chose hunting shirts as their new uniforms. It is, however, with the frontier that this garment is most associated. Unfortunately, few examples of 18th or early 19th century hunting shirts survive and the contemporary written descriptions do not complete the picture.

Hunting Shirts - All evidence indicates that the double + caped, open front, heavily fringed hunting frocks which are so common among re-enactors were not in existence until about 1775

## **Original example of Hunter Fringed shirt –**

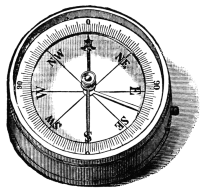


Dr. La Mayeur, a physician during the Revolutionary War, wore this coat on hunting and exploring trips into Virginia's western frontiers.

The original, is in the Valentine Museum, in Richmond, Virginia. It is knee length, caped and fringed beyond belief.

All the handcut fringe is 2" long -- there is fringe beneath the collar, applied fringe on the cape, the cape edge is fringed, both armholes and sleeves are fringed, there is applied fringe on the body as well as the bottom of the coat.

Dr. La Mayeur wore the ultimate buckskin coat



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## **The Ubiquitous Hunting Frock, American War of Independence Garb**

**By Terry Martin**

Anyone familiar with the American Revolution has a mental picture of troops attired in a variety of garments. The Revolutionary War saw the colonial army progress to literal rags due to uniform shortages. Eventually, the alliance with France leads to uniforms and more consistent clothing allowances. However, from 1775-1778 the Continental Army did suffer in clothing and attiring their troops in sufficient battlefield attire. The armies of George III and his paid mercenaries were dressed in their finest which was supplied through a regular commissary. The Continental soldier had his clothing allowance supplied by the states. The states lack of organization as well as unscrupulous business dealings prevented the Continental Army from having necessary clothing. The Continental Soldier worn the same clothing articles, but the states were not consistent in getting the articles and clothing to the troops. The mode of warfare adopted by the Colonials caused a need for a ubiquitous garment. The shortage of cloth leads the American troops to adopt the hunting frock as standard dress. The American Army found the hunting frock to be very versatile. It was easy to make, easy to remove, and allowed a freedom of movement not unlike farmer's or workman's clothing. It also could be made cheaply and allowed for a utilitarian manner to cloth troops.

General George Washington considered it to be an "ideal military garment". It was made famous as the garb of the rifle regiments and was worn as field dress by most of the American army throughout the war. The hunting frock was made of deer leather, linen, or homespun. It could also be dyed in a variety of colors. It is noted that regiments dyed the hunting frocks in the following colors: white, natural linen, purple, brown, black, green and blue

## **Washington's General Order July, 24th, 1776**

"No dress can be cheaper, nor more convenient, as the wearer may be cool in warm weather and warm in cool weather by putting on under-cloaths which will not change the outward dress, Winter or Summer-besides which it is a dress justly supposed to carry no small terror to the enemy, who think every such persona a complete marksman"

## **Some Rev War Regiments who wore the Hunting frock.**

### **Kirkwood's Delaware's....**

Colonel David Hall's Delaware Regiment was re assigned to the Southern Army in October 1780. They fought at Camden and were reorganized as a light company under Robert Kirkwood. They established a reputation as an elite regiment in the Southern Army serving under Captain Robert Kirkwood. Their company was called "Kirkwood's Delaware's". They were issued a pair of new shoes, a light tannish hunting shirt, and blue-striped overalls in October 1780 from North Carolina stores. This uniform was worn throughout the remainder of the war and at the battles of Cowpens, Guilford Court House, Hobkirk's Hill, Siege of Ninety Six, and Eutaw Springs.

### **Minute Battalion of Culpepper County, Virginia...**

Consisted of ten companies of "regulars" from York and James City Counties. They marched in the fall of 1775 to Williamsburg to join in the expedition against Norfolk, where the Royal Governor, Lord Dunmore, was entrenched. According to the account of a Captain George Slaughter, the whole regiment appeared in hunting shirts made of strong, brown linen, dyed the color of leaves of the trees. On the breast of each hunting shirt was worked in large white letters the words "Liberty or Death". Fort Duquesne has an excellent 1/10<sup>th</sup> scale bust of this regiment.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment, Continental Line, 1776**

A wide variety of colors and types of hunting shirts were worn during the American Revolution, but nowhere does there appear to be more variety than in the Virginia regiments. The 6<sup>th</sup> was one of the first nine battalions or regiments to be raised by Virginia for the Continental service in February-March, 1776. Under the authority of act of the Virginia Convention of December 1, 1775 the 6<sup>th</sup> Virginia was raised. The 6<sup>th</sup> turned out with the 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> Virginia and marched to Williamsburg,

in spring of 1776

It is recorded that the Captains of the 6<sup>th</sup> worked to provide themselves men with hunting shirts, short and fringed. The men's shirts to be short and plain, the Sergeants to have a small white cuff.

## **First Georgia Regiment of Infantry**

Early Georgia troops were attired in blue or black coats faced with red, but in the field the hunting shirt was the standard dress for officers and enlisted men. In late 1777, they were furnished with long overalls/leggings (wool for winter and white course lined or duck in the summer), captured British accoutrements, and dark reddish brown hunting shirts.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Independent Company of Maryland**

The Maryland Council authorized their 7 Independent Companies to cloth their men at a cost not to exceed 13.5 lbs. Per man. Captain James Hindman clothed his regiment in osnabrug linen hunting shirts dyed purple with red cape and cuffs, buckskin breeches, and spatter dashes of black linen. Hindman's Company defended New York in summer of 1775 and later saw service in the Battle of Long Island and in the fall campaign of 1776 in New York. They camped with Smallwood's Maryland Regiment. Michael Roberts Miniatures has an excellent 1200MM figure of this regiment.

from

<http://www.atlantafigures.com/tips1.htm>