

# On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – April 2009

Well this is our 1<sup>st</sup> newsletter

We hope you like it

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Did you know - There were two Boston tea parties!

## 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>

Contact : John Fowler

Ph: 03 5753 4455

Email: [chookster@vfowler.com](mailto:chookster@vfowler.com)



## Colonial Beverages

Cocktails have been traced back to before the Revolution. And since many of those Rhode Island Colonists that burnt the *Gaspee* in 1772 were involved in rum and gin distilling and smuggling, we can assume they were also very familiar with some of the following drinks. The usual drinks were punches, cobbler, toddies, slings, bounces, juleps, snagarees, and flip. The common ingredients were gin, brandy, Medford (dark) rum, port wine (sack), bourbon, rye, and bitters. Cobblers are of American origin and are great favorites in all warm climates. Hot drinks included hot buttered rum, Tom & Jerry, hot brandy sling with nutmeg, and the Mulls including mulled cider, and hot applejack.

### **Blackstrap**

A mixture of spirituous liquors usually consisting of rum and molasses. Among sailors Blackstrap was (maybe still is) considered any common wine of the Mediterranean.

### **Grog**

Any mixture of spirits and water, especially rum and water. The term comes from the nickname of 'Old Grog' for Admiral E. Vernon (1684-1757) of the Royal Navy who, in bad weather, habitually wore grogram (a coarse silk and mohair fabric) and who introduced the idea of serving diluted spirits to English sailors. Thus it invaded colonial customs and was known variously as Grog, Grogshop, Groggy, and Grogger (which was at that time also a term for low-class drinking places.)

### **Mimbo**

A simple and rather awesome drink consisting of straight dark rum diluted with loaf sugar

### **Snagaree**

Made of red wine or fruit juice (take your pick) and soda water.

### **Stone-Fence**

Sweet cider and apple-jack or brandy

### **From**

<http://www.gaspee.com/ColonialRecipes.html#Drinks>

## Flintlocks History

### **When was the flintlock invented?**

In 1608, a Frenchman from Normandy, one Marin le Bourgeois, was appointed to the French court. He made the first true flintlock for King Louis XIII shortly after his accession to the throne in 1610. This was not an idea that sprang full-blown from his mind, but the result of putting together the pieces of a puzzle which already existed. The development of firearms had proceeded from matchlock to wheel-lock to snaphaunce and miquelet in the previous two or three centuries, and each type had been an improvement, contributing some design features which were useful. It remained for Monsieur le Bourgeois to fit these various features together to create the flintlock. The new system quickly became popular, and was known and used in various forms throughout Europe by 1630.

### **How long was the flintlock in use?**

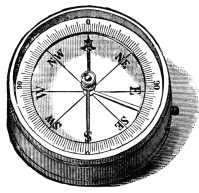
Unlike most weapons systems and configurations, which last a few decades, the flintlock was center stage for both military and civilian use for over 200 years. Not until the Reverend Alexander John Forsyth, a Scottish minister, invented the rudimentary percussion system in 1807 did the flintlock begin to slide into oblivion. The slide was a slow one, even at that, since the percussion system was not widely used until around 1830, and the flintlock continued in use until the time of the American Civil War, 1861-65.

### **What about flints?**

Black British flints are highly thought of, today, and many shooters prefer them. However, archaeological digs have shown that no flints of that type were used during the French and Indian (Seven Years) war, that only 5% of that type were used in the American Revolution, and only 50% during the war of 1812. The main type used instead was the tan colored French flints, apparently the standard of the time.

**From** "Beginners Guide to Flintlock Shooting" by Brad Finch

<http://members.aye.net/~bspen/index.html>



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## A Colonial Gentlemen's Clothing: A Glossary of Terms

### Banyan

A gentleman's banyan was a loose, informal robe to be worn instead of a coat. Influenced by Oriental fashion, these popular robes were also called Indian gowns, nightgowns, or wrappers. Cut either in a loose T-shape or as a long simplified coat, they were acceptable wear for home or informal business. Made most often of patterned materials, these useful garments could vary from light and cool to quilted and warm.

### Breeches

From the late 16th century until the early 19th century, most men wore breeches as their lower body garment. Through the centuries breeches were seen in many forms and lengths. In the early 18th century breeches were barely seen beneath long waistcoats and coats. By the mid-18th century they were more noticeable beneath shorter waistcoats and open coats, and so the cut of breeches became tighter and revealed the shape of the leg. Worn by all levels of society, breeches were made in a great variety of silks, cottons, linens, wools, knits, and leathers.

### Coat

A coat was the uppermost layer of the 18th century man's suit, worn over waistcoat and breeches. Both the cut and the title of the fashionable coat saw several evolutions through the course of the century. In the late 17th and early 18th centuries a coat was a relatively straight loose garment, with the slight fullness in the knee-length skirts falling into folds over the backside of the hips. In the 1720s and 1730s the skirts of the fashionable coat grew in volume and were set into regular pleats. In the 1730s an alternative to the weighty full skirted coat was developed. This new fashioned coat, with narrow skirts set in pleats and other defining features, including a collar, was termed a Frock. Through the middle decades of the century both the coat and the frock were worn, coats being for fashionable full dress, frocks for fashionable undress.

By the 1770s the distinctions in purpose and terminology were becoming blurred. None but the most conservative older man would be seen in a full-skirted coat. The frock had entered into fashionable full dress, and was by many simply referred to as a coat. In the closing decade of the 18th century and into the next, the frock dominated fashionable dress and language.

### Cloak

The cloak has been the most enduring of outer garments throughout the history of fashion. In the 18th century a man's cloak was made with a collar at the neck, a cape over the shoulders, and hung to the knee or below. The most usual form was circular. Cloaks were made of dense well-fulled wools, often dyed scarlet. Other choices in fabric included worsteds, camlets, and occasionally plaids. Cloaks were also known a "roquelaire" or "rockets." It was in the 18th century that a rival to the dominance of the cloak appeared in the form of the great coat.

### Cravat

The 18th-century man almost always wore some sort of neck cloth, whether fashionably dressed or at labor. The cravat was one of many forms of neckwear. It was a narrow length of white linen that could be adorned on its ends with lace, fringe, or knots. It was worn wrapped about the throat and loosely tied in front. The cravat was first seen in fashionable dress in the mid-17th century. It was derived from the "crabate" worn by Croatian soldiers serving with the French Army (ca. 1645-1650). By the mid 18th century it was worn in informal attire.

### Great Coat

Many men of the 18th century chose great coats as their protective outer garment in foul weather. Most often made of heavy fulled woolens, it served well to keep one warm and dry. Some men are known to have had accompanying waistcoats and leggings made in the same heavy wools. The great coat generally had a collar, a cape over the shoulders, deep cuffs, and was worn to knee length or longer.

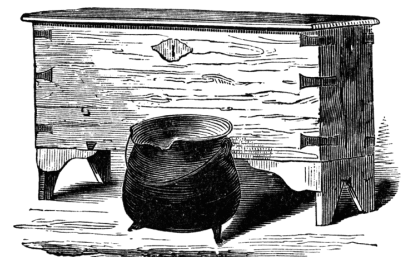
Occasionally, great coats were made in alternative fabrics of lighter weights, particularly oiled silk and linen

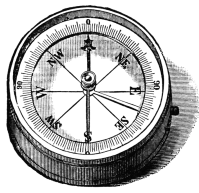
### Hat

Towards the end of the 17th century the vast wigs then worn by some men made it impractical for them to wear the fashionable broad-brimmed hat unless necessary. Custom dictated, however, that hats should then be carried beneath the arm. Rapidly, the hat began to be folded to make it easier to carry. In the 18th century this habit and changing fashions led to many sorts of folded or cocked hats - cocked on one, two, or three sides. It was the hat with three sides cocked that dominated fashion and was seen in innumerable variations of adornment and proportion. While beaver felt was the preferred material others, including wool and camel's down, were available.

### Hunting Shirt

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. Reconstructions of this garment are largely conjectural.





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## Leggings or Spatterdashes

Since a man's breeches of the 18th century came to just beneath the knee, a covering for the lower leg was useful for warmth and protection. Leggings fully covered the lower leg from a few inches above the knee extending to cover the top of the foot. Spatterdashes covered the leg from the mid-shin to the top of the foot. Made of stout woolen or linen cloth or of leather, leggings and spatterdashes were worn by the sporting gentleman, laboring man, and the military.

## Monmoth or MonmouthCap

In the 17th and 18th centuries small knitted woolen caps worn by the laboring sort, sailors, and slaves were often referred to as "Monmouth Caps." The name is derived from one of England's great port cities and its particular associations with seafaring. Knitting of caps and stockings was a common pastime for sailors, they sold their wares in the dock streets for additional income.

## Neck Handkerchief

The most informal sort of neckwear generally worn by sporting gentlemen, working tradesmen, and laboring slaves. It commonly was a square folded and tied around the neck. They were usually made of linen, cotton, or silk, and could be in white, plain colors, woven checks and stripes, or printed patterns.

## Negligé Cap ( smoking cap )

The negligé cap was a small informal cap often, though not always, worn to accompany a banyan. For some men it served to cover a shaved head when the wig was removed, others wore them over their own hair. Made in a variety of materials, these caps were often embroidered. It could be constructed in different ways, the most usual of which was to be cut in wedge-shaped quarters with a turned-up band.

## Shirt

The shirt was worn as a man's undergarment, covering the body from neck to knee. Most were made of white linen which could be very fine or very coarse. A gentleman's best shirt may have ruffles (ruffs) at the wrist and/or breast. A laborer's shirt was sometimes made of unbleached linen or small patterned checks and stripes. A plain shirt might serve as a nightshirt.

## Shoes

Men's shoes were made in a great variety of styles and qualities. Fashionable low-heeled shoes or pumps were of softer leather, coarse common shoes of sturdier leathers. Black was by far the most usual color, and only occasionally were other colors seen. While buckles were the primary mode of fastening, ties were worn for utilitarian purposes. Boots of many sorts were worn for sporting, riding and working.

## Stockings or Hose

Stockings of the 18th century were worn by men and women, and were most often knit. The knitting frame (machine) was developed in the late 16th century and many improvements during the 18th century increasingly forced hand knitters from their business. Fashionable stockings of silk or cotton were generally white, and at times were decorated with knit or embroidered patterns at the ankle, referred to as "clocks" or "clocking." More utilitarian stockings of linen, and particularly worsted wool, were seen in colors, with blue and gray predominating. Occasionally, coarse stockings for the low laboring sort and slaves were cut of woolen or linen cloth and sewn to fit the shape of the leg.

## Stocks

A stock was a gentlemen's most formal neckwear. In fashionable dress it was universally of fine white linen pleated to fit beneath the chin. For martial purposes it was often constructed of black leather or woven horsehair. For the clergy the white linen stock had falling bands added. All of these forms were buckled behind the wearer's neck.

## Trousers

During the 18th century breeches were worn by all levels of society; however, trousers were also worn by middling tradesmen, laborers, sailors, and slaves. Trousers were generally cut with a straight leg and were worn to the ankle or slightly shorter. As trousers were utilitarian garments, they were made mostly of durable linens.

## Underdrawers

The primary male undergarment of the 18th century was a knee-length shirt, yet some men also chose to wear underdrawers. Made of linen or of woolen flannel, and always white, knee-length underdrawers served as separate linings to breeches. They aided in preserving the breeches and added an additional layer of warmth. The extent to which underdrawers were worn is not well documented.

## Waistcoat

The 18th century man was almost never seen without his waistcoat. Not to have it on was considered "undressed." The waistcoat, or vest, of the 1770s was fashionably worn to the upper part of the thigh, opening in a "V" beneath the stomach. Waistcoats were made in all qualities of silk, cotton, wool, and linens. If adorned, it could be embroidered, printed, brocaded, quilted, tasselled, silver or gold laced, and was generally the most elaborate article of men's dress. When worn for utilitarian purposes it could have sleeves, be called a jacket, and worn outermost instead of a longer skirted fashionable coat

From Colonial Williamsburg  
<http://www.history.org/history/clothing/men/mglossary.cfm>

## Did You Know -

### There were two Boston tea parties!

Everyone knows how 50 or 60 "Sons of Liberty," disguised as Mohawks, protested the 3 cents per pound British tax on tea by dumping chests of the popular drink into Boston Harbor on December 16, 1773. Fewer know that the improper Bostonians repeated the performance on March 7, 1774. The two tea parties cost the British around \$3 million in modern money