

Fort Foster State Historic Site Re-Enactment Safety Guidelines

These safety guidelines will be strictly enforced by the park staff, event volunteers, and re-enactors.

General.

All battle re-enactment participants must attend the mandatory re-enactor safety meeting, held during Saturday Morning. Late arrivals must report to the safety officer of the event in order to participate in the skirmishing.

All weapons, cartridge boxes and pouches, must be inspected prior to the battle re-enactment to ensure compliance with safety procedure. All powder horns or flasks must be empty. No one will take the field without having their arms and accouterments inspected for safety by event authorized re-enactor commanders or their subordinates.

Park visitors and battle re-enactment spectators are not permitted to handle re-enactor weapons.

Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed during normal park hours. Any intoxicated person will be removed from the event.

Soldier and Seminole commanders are responsible for the conduct of all re-enactor participants in their units during the event. They must ensure that all are aware of these safety guidelines, and abide by them.

No weapons will be carried during the course of the event by re-enactors under 14 years of age.

No projectiles, bullets, musket balls, or loading blocks will be carried by any participant during the event.

Battle Safety.

Among the troops, only officers may carry single-shot pistols.

No hand-to-hand combat or similar theatrics during the battle.

Opposing forces should approach no closer than 15 yards apart of on another during the balance of the skirmishing.

Do not aim directly at individuals when firing blanks. Elevate your muzzles at close ranges.

All ramrods will be left in camp, with the exception of selected persons, for the purpose of inspecting muzzles prior to the battle.

All arms must be loaded with pre-rolled paper cartridges, made without tape or staples. No wadding, double-charging, or ramming permitted.

Cartridge boxes or pouches should contain only paper cartridges, and will be inspected to ensure no objects which might be transferred to the bore are in them. Ammunition will be distributed to battle participants.

Maximum Powder Charges for Paper Cartridges:

Rifles, small bore: 60 Grains

Flintlock Muskets etc, (.64-.71 cal.): 120 grains.

The term "MEDIC" will only be used during the event in case of actual medical emergency. When heard, all event activity must be ceased, and the problem attended to.

No persons younger than 14 years on the battlefield during the re-enactment. Children 12 or older who play fife or drum may act as musicians. Children will not be employed as color bearers, water carriers, runners, etc.

Historic Weapons Firing Demonstrations.

All re-enactors wishing to demonstrate their weapons to the public outside of the battle re-enactment are to follow these procedures.

No firing should be done in the camps or in the vendor area.

During firing demonstrations, the firer must be accompanied by another re-enactor to ensure a free and clear field of fire.

No firing demonstrations should be done without the knowledge of the event safety coordinator.

Before firing, the non-period term "Fire in the Hole!" should be called out to warn persons nearby. Visitors with hearing aids or small children should be cautioned regarding the noise.

Should your weapon misfire, please continue the demonstration, explaining the procedures to the visitors, while keeping them at a safe distance while the arm is discharged. If the arm will not fire after repeated attempts, conclude the demonstration and remove it to a secluded area to render it safe.

Fort Foster Re-enactment Guidelines



Authenticity.

The Fort Foster Re-enactment is an attempt to educate and excite the public regarding the historical events which took place on this site during the 2nd Seminole War. Every effort must be made by all participants to project a historically accurate appearance during the public tours and programs.

Impressions suitable for the Fort Foster military garrison include US Army Dragoons, Artillery, and Infantry, US Navy and Marine Corps personnel, and US Army Volunteers (militia) of the 1837 period. Seminole warriors should dress in equipment appropriate to the documented Seminole styles of the 2nd Seminole War period. The following guidelines have been produced to help you, the volunteer re-enactor, better interpret these events.

Event Rules.

Organization.

The Seminoles will be organized as a small raiding party. The troops of the garrison as a small battalion of at least two companies; viz. one company of regular Army, Navy, and Marine Corps personnel, and a second company of militia troops.

Horses:

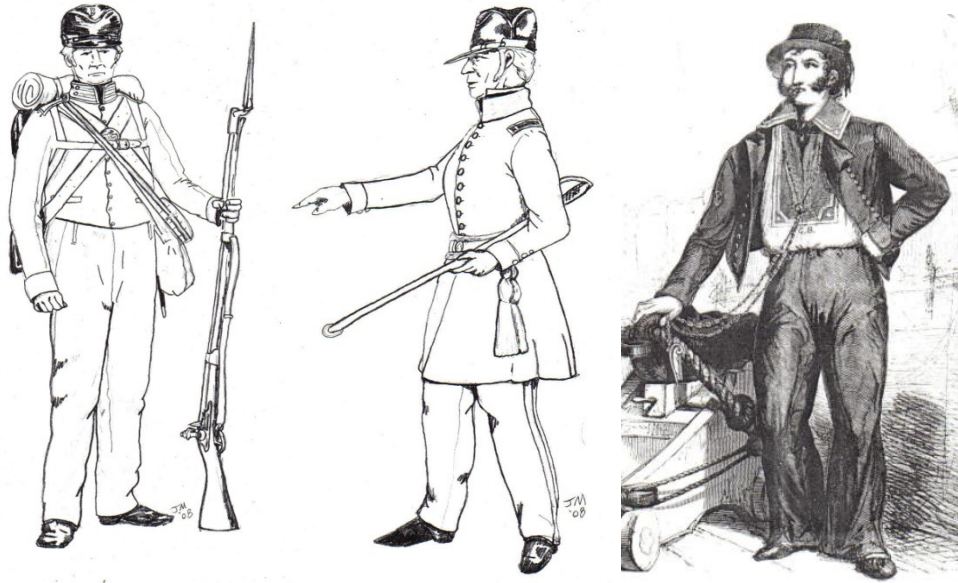
All horses brought to the event site must have current Coggins Test documentation. *Horses will not be employed during the battle reenactments.*

Period & Modern Camps:

Seminole Camp, may include brush arbors, period tents, palmetto sheds, etc. Pre-1840 camp equipage is required. *Teepees are not acceptable. All modern or post-1840 items in camp must be hidden during public hours, and limited in use at all times.*

Military Camp, will be limited to 1830s era tents and shelters. Campaign shelters, including arbors, flies, etc. are preferred. Officer's wall-tents and Civil War "A" frame tents are acceptable. Camp furniture should be kept to a minimum. *All post-1840 items in camp must remain hidden from view during public hours. A **Modern Camping** area is available to participants, vendors, or demonstrators who wish to utilize modern tents, vehicles, or equipments in camp.*

United States Soldiers, Sailors, Marines:



US Army Enlisted Soldier (left) and Army Officer (center), in the M1832 Undress Uniforms. At right is a US Navy seaman, ca.1837, in blue cloth jacket and trousers, white frock with blue collar, placket, and cuffs, and janned straw hat.

US Regular Army:

Forage Cap: The leather forage cap is preferred. Straw hats may be worn. [M1825 chakos forage cap is discouraged] *Not acceptable are pattern 1839 cloth forage caps, Civil War caps, etc.*

Jacket, Greatcoat, or Shirt: The 1832 pattern sky-blue fatigue jacket (infantry or artillery trim) is preferred. Sky-blue wool great coats and 1821 pattern white cotton or flannel shirts are acceptable. Sky-blue cloth trousers are preferred. Summer white trousers and jackets are acceptable. Officer's dark blue frock coats are acceptable with correct buttons and insignias.

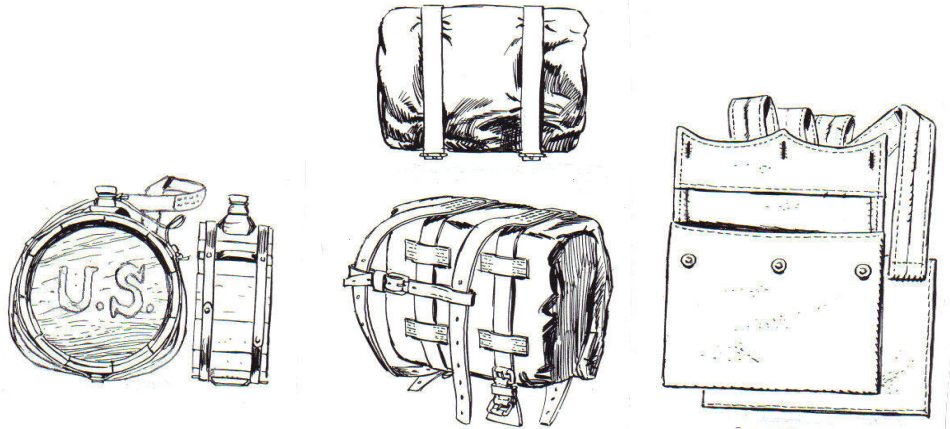
Navy re-enactors should wear period appropriate uniforms. Officers should wear suitable clothing of the 1830 Regulations. For sailors, white or blue naval trousers, blue cloth monkey jacket or white frock, black neckerchief, and straw hat.

Marine Corps re-enactors should wear 1834 pattern uniforms, particularly the gray cloth or white linen fatigue clothing, and leather forage cap.

Equipments: White or black buff shoulder belts, M1808 or M1828 Cartridge boxes, and appropriate canteens, haversacks, knapsacks, etc. (see drawings on next page). Blanket rolls (of correct white wool blankets) are acceptable. *Civil War cartridge boxes and belts with all plates removed are acceptable. No Mexican War or Civil War waist belts.*

Weapons: US M1816 Musket and bayonet are preferred, Charleville or Brown Bess Muskets acceptable. M1803 Harper's Ferry Rifles acceptable.

Volunteers/Militia Troops:



Correct 1837 Regular Army and Militia equipments include wood canteens painted blue with sewn russet leather strap, black painted knapsacks with black leather straps, and unpainted cotton or linen haversacks of the styles illustrated above. Any types other than the above should not be employed.

Preferred clothing for the US Volunteers impression includes any correct 1820s-1830s style civilian clothing, hunting dress, or militia uniform clothing. Typical American citizen's clothing of the period is preferred.

Hats or Caps, should be of 1830s period styles, including top or plain slouch hats, round hats, straw hats, clerk's caps, fur, cloth, or velvet hunting caps, or army style leather forage caps. *No Civil War kepi's or forage caps.*

Coats, Jackets, Vests, Shirts, may include any 1800-1840 period tailed coat, frock coat, or jacket, including hunting frocks, or vests. Any early 19th Century style shirt is acceptable. Cravats should be of the 1830s style. *No "John Wayne" shirts. No Civil War Union or Confederate coats or jackets.*

Trousers, should be of the small-fall or broad-fall types of cotton, linen, or wool. Button fly trousers of early 19th Century pattern are acceptable. *No 18th Century breeches, kilts, or blue jeans.*

Footwear, Should be typical leather boots, bootees, or shoes of early 19th Century pattern. Moccasins are discouraged.

Equipments: The same accouterments mentioned for US Soldiers above are preferred. Hunting pouches and horns are acceptable. Civil War cartridge boxes with "US/CS" plates removed are acceptable. *Not acceptable are Mexican/Civil War leather waist belts with brass US/CS plates. Percussion caps may be carried in vest or trouser pockets or pouches for that purpose instead of a cap pouch. Civil War bayonets and scabbards should not be worn.*

Weapons: flintlock muskets, or early American hunting rifles in flint or percussion are preferred. Single and double barreled fowling pieces are acceptable.

Seminole Warriors:



Should be dressed in correct 1820s-1830s style Seminole men's clothing, like that seen in the period artwork shown below. Any beadwork on clothing and accouterments should be of the documented Seminole/Creek style.

Headwear; should include a turban or dark hair cut to the Seminole style. *No Halloween fright wigs, western, or northern Indian headdresses.*

Grooming; Seminole re-enactors are best to be clean-shaven. Thin mustaches are acceptable, though best hidden by paint.

Long Shirts or Plain Shirts; should include an 1830s style Seminole/Creek long shirt, or plain trade shirt, made from solid, striped, or calico print cotton or linen, etc. Seminole style silk or cotton handkerchiefs, sashes, and leather or cloth beaded pouches are preferred. Plain fringed hunting shirts are acceptable. *Not acceptable are fringed leather garments of plains Indian or rendezvous styles.*

Lower Body Clothing; includes a breech cloth of woolen cloth with a tapered or triangular point, wool front seam leggings, with tape trimmed edges, or of natural brain-tanned leather with side seam flaps. Bare legs are acceptable. Preferred moccasins should be of southeastern Seminole/Creek "pucker-vamp" style. Woodlands center seam moccasins in natural leathers are acceptable.

Seminole Accouterments; may include decorations of silver pendant earrings, silver arm and wrist bands, silver crescent gorgets, and finger-woven sashes and leg ties in chevron or diamond patterns. Rifle accouterments should include a decorated or plain cloth or leather hunting pouch, with powder horn. *Unacceptable items include obvious Northern or Western Native equipments, modern wristwatches or jewelry.*

Seminole Weapons, should include flintlock long rifles, fowling pieces, or muskets. Acceptable alternatives include carbine length rifles in flint or percussion, or similar early 19th Century style arms. Tomahawks, knives, and clubs should be pre-1837 eastern styles only.

Fort Foster State Historic Site Battle Re-enactment Scenario.

With historical facts in mind, and with the requisite safety precautions completed, the following key points should be followed for the re-creation of Seminole War combat at Fort Foster State Historic Site. Comic behavior and hand-to-hand combat should be avoided. **In case of actual injury, the term “Medic” will be employed.** No casualties are necessary as none are known to have been inflicted in the fighting being interpreted; the Soldiers were well defended by the fort, and the Seminoles by the hammock and brush.

- I. **Seminole force takes positions in the hammock on the opposite side of the River from Fort Foster. Soldiers lounge around the fort and camp. An armed sentinel is posted in the officer’s blockhouse.**
- II. **The Seminoles open fire on troops in front of the fort.** The attack commences only after the spectator lines are erected, the *battle areas* cleared of un-authorized persons, and all event safety personnel in place to keep people outside the safety ropes.
- III. **The soldiers of the garrison on duty or in camp outside the post are surprised by the firing.** Any outside the fort run in covered by the fire of the sentinel in the blockhouse. The troops are form at their assigned fighting positions in the fort.
- IV. **The Seminole warriors quickly take possession of the bridge, and some move to positions on the fort side of the river bank.** The warriors who cross the river must clear the bridge quickly as the cannon will commence firing over its span. The warriors continue to fire on the fort from the river banks individually or as a group during the remainder of the skirmish. Safe smoke effects may be employed under the bridge to interpret the Seminoles attempt to burn it.
- V. **The troops in the fort deliver a heavy fire from the officer’s blockhouse and stockade, while the mountain howitzer is fired from the sally port three times (ca. 20 minutes).** The troops fire individually, or as ordered by their commanders. The Mountain Howitzer will fire *three times* during the skirmish.
- VI. **Following the *third cannon shot* the Seminoles withdraw across the bridge and into the hammock on the north bank.** The skirmish has ended once the third cannon shot is fired.
- VII. **All weapons are cleared.** The Seminoles in the hammock, and the Soldiers in the fort, all fire a last volley to clear weapons. After weapons are cleared the firing is concluded.
- VIII. **After the firing is concluded, the spectator lines are dropped and the troops and Seminoles resume their living history stations, etc.**

