

COMPANY PURPOSE

The 4th Company, Brigade of Guards in America, LTD, commemorates the service of British soldiers during the American Revolution. The Brigade was considered the premier combat unit of the Crown Forces in North America. The Brigade of Guards was a composite unit formed for service in America by taking drafts from the existing regiments of Foot Guards, the Sovereign's personal guards. These drafts were organized into the ten companies that formed the Brigade. Most of these companies were formed with drafts from a single regiment of the Foot Guards. The 4th or "Brigade" Company, however, was comprised of officers and men-at-arms from all three regiments of Foot Guards: the 1st Regiment (today's Grenadier Guards), the Coldstream Guards (2nd Regiment), and the 3rd Regiment (today's Scots Guards). Our unit concentrates on portraying the men of the First and Coldstream Guards.

Membership as a soldier is open to any able-bodied male over the age of sixteen. Musicians may apply at the age of fourteen. All minors are required to have parental permission. Women and family members of soldiers may join the 4th Company as distaff

All members are required to pay annual dues, which are used to defray the costs of operating the Company. The 4th Company is a 501-(c)-(3) not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational organization. Many of the expenses associated with purchasing an individual's kit and participation in scheduled events are tax-deductible.

The core of our members are located primarily in North Carolina and Virginia, with other members in other states. The recreated company participates in annual events from Massachusetts to Florida, and also in Canada. Members have been involved in all major Bicentennial celebrations from Lexington and Concord to Yorktown, even having appeared before Presidents Ford and Reagan. Our members have also appeared in several motion pictures ("The Last of the Mohicans" and "Patriot," for example) and numerous PBS documentaries.

Families are encouraged to participate in most Company activities. This has historical precedence, as it was not unusual in the 18th century to have soldiers' families accompany their men on campaign. Patterns and sources are available for women and children to assemble or buy authentic clothing to allow the portrayal of "distaff" during the American Revolution.

This is a family activity, which allows members to travel to historic sites and "live" the history that others may only read about.

HERE ARE THE ANSWERS TO A FEW OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASIKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE 4TH COMPANY

Who are you guys?

We are a group of men and women from many walks of life who share an interest in bringing history to life. As members of various regional and national organizations, such as the Brigade of the American Revolution (BAR), and the British Brigade, we work to accomplish their joint purpose: to keep alive the life and times of the common soldier of the American War for Independence. To that end, we have recreated, as accurately as our research has allowed, a composite company of soldiers of King Georges's 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, the Coldstream Guards and the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards.

What is the 4th Company, Brigade of Guards in America?

The 4th Company, Brigade of Guards in America, commemorates the service of British soldiers during the American Revolution. The Brigade was considered the premier combat unit of the Crown Forces in North America. The Brigade of Guards was a composite unit containing ten company-sized formations from the Sovereign's personal guard. The 4th Company contained officers and men-at-arms from the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, the Coldstream Guards, and the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards. Our unit concentrates on portraying the men of the 1st Guards and Coldstream Guards.

What do you do?

We portray the military life and customs of the period in all its aspects. Far from being the mindless automaton represented in popular mythology, the British soldier was a formidable adversary who won the vast majority of the battles during the Revolution. We present "living history" demonstrations consisting of field tactics, drill and camp life. We present shows and talks to schools, as well as interested civic and fraternal groups. We travel to take part in re-enactments of Revolutionary War battles with other members of the BAR and the British Brigade. Members have appeared as extras in several major motion pictures and historical documentaries. All our members are *volunteers*, and bear the cost of procuring their own uniforms, equipment, and travel. Our activities are devoid of 21st Century anachronisms, to the extent that we do not wear jewelry (watches, earrings, rings, etc.) nor allow facial hair on our soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers. *Physical fitness and general military appearance and bearing are stressed.* This is in keeping with the recognized practices of the 18th Century British Army.

Where do you get your uniforms and equipment?

We make everything that we can ourselves. Our uniforms and equipment are the products of years of research, and we take great pride in our accuracy. Several British military museums were impressed enough by our work that they have asked for samples of our uniforms and equipment for display purposes. Only accurate materials are used - wool linen, brass, pewter, leather, steel wood, etc., and we use period tailoring and assembly. The unit is responsible for the production of equipment items unique to the Guards. There are numerous commercial sources for a great deal of the equipment, but we highly recommend that new recruits consult with current members before they purchase any items. Current members are willing to assist the new recruit with the gathering of the necessary kit.

How much does it cost?

Unfortunately, this is not a cheap avocation. The basic required uniform, arms, and equipment can run more than U.S. \$1600.00. Musicians (drummers and fifers) can usually acquire their uniform and equipment for considerably less as the unit provides both the instrument and the elaborate regimental coat and bear-skin hat. Purchasing used or second-hand uniforms and equipment can significantly reduce costs. The good news is that the initial investment usually lasts a lifetime. All costs associated with the procurement of uniforms and equipment are tax-deductible owing to the units status as a 501-(c)-(3) not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational organization. Travel expenses are deferred to a great deal by car-pooling to events and staying in the Brigade's encampment. We sleep in period-accurate tents and eat period-appropriate meals prepared by our members in the unit's period-correct kitchens.

Why are you depicting a British unit? Aren't you patriotic?

The Brigade of the American Revolution, one of the umbrella organizations to which we belong, is made up of units representing all the nations that took part in the American War for Independence. In order to tell the entire story of the times, all sides must be represented. By depicting the British soldier as he was - tough, capable, and courageous, we educate the public, debunking many inaccurate ideas about the British that have been handed down for generations. Being part of the 4th Company certainly does not mean that any of our members think our Founding Fathers were wrong to fight for our freedom. We believe that an accurate portrayal of the infamous Redcoat will bring increased respect for the hardships the Founding Fathers had to overcome to create this great nation. Recreating a British unit is also much more difficult. The standards of drill discipline, and dress are much higher than for the rebel side. Knowing this, many of our members relish the challenge.

Who can join?

In order to take the field as a uniformed member of the 4th Company, you must be a male of at least sixteen (16) years of age, and physically able to handle a flintlock musket and participate in the demanding manual exercises and company drill. Male musicians can apply

for membership at the age of fourteen (14), but require parental permission. Children may participate as long as their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) is/are an active member of the Company. Wives and/or girlfriends as well as other ladies who share our interests are encouraged to join. There is no upper age limit.

What about the girlfriend or wife and kids, what can they do?

The armies of the time had a number of women and children attached. As living history is definitely a family oriented avocation, wives, children, and sweethearts of our modern day soldiers can take part by depicting their 18th century counterparts. They portray women and children of the period, in all of the various roles that women and children held. They enact their roles as officer's ladies or wives of soldiers and their families. The ladies and wives also do many of the crafts that would have been done in the camp. Without the women, the 18th century armies would have had a more difficult time than they did. Clothing guidelines, which observe the same standard of accuracy as the men's, are available on the website.



Three members of the 4th Coy showing (from left to right) the regimentals unique to the First, Third, and Coldstream Regiments of Foot Guards. Picture courtesy Deborah Callahan, Tryon Palace, New Bern NC. October 2000.