**Historical tidbits…**

• Did you know that the “other ranks” of Fraser’s Highlanders did not have lapels or lace on their full-dress scarlet jackets until 1761? This was due to time constraints, or as quaintly recorded in War Office correspondence in 1759, “for want of time.” For obvious reasons, the government did not want armed Highlanders hanging around the country, so they were shipped off to North America as soon as they were raised. As confirmation, the c.1760 oil portrait of Ensign Malcolm Macpherson of Phoness shows a number of private soldiers in the background (cleaning their muskets), all wearing plain jackets. It would appear that “properly laced and lapell’d” jackets would not be worn by Fraser’s Highlanders until the 1761 uniform replacements were received, the regiment then garrisoning the colony of Quebec.

• Did you know that you had to have at least “two opposing teeth” to join the army in the 18th century? This to ensure that the men could bite off the end of the cartridge in which the powder and bullet were combined. While there does not appear to be any official medical requirement for two opposing teeth, it would fall upon the non-medical recruiting staff to ensure that new infantry recruits could bite a cartridge. It would be extremely difficult to accomplish this procedure with tooth-less gums, especially under combat conditions.

• Did you know that the “other ranks” of Fraser’s Highlanders did not wear buckles on their shoes? As observed by Grenadier Sergeant James Thompson when he visited the camp of the 42nd Highlanders in Montreal (September 1760), “officers as well as the private men [of the 42nd] had silver shoe-buckles, all of the same pattern,” but lamented, “Now, our men wore only leather thongs in their shoes.”

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