

Study: Greatcoated Line Infantry Equipment and Placement

Here Brun renders Bommer's illustration of line infantry equipment and the manner in which soldiers carried it.

The left figure exhibits the proper "Method by which the *Fusiliers* would wear the bayonet scabbard," according to regulation. As center-company privates had no *sabre-briquet*, they wore only one shoulder belt. Under the *ancien régime*, all infantry (even grenadiers) officially used this style of attaching the bayonet frog, though some had begun to carry it differently as early as 1776.

With the advent of the Revolution, elite troops more frequently carried the bayonet on the other shoulder belt next to the *sabre-briquet*. This can be seen on the right figure, the back view of a grenadier (the brown bayonet scabbard is visible just above and parallel to the *sabre-briquet*). The shift of the bayonet to the left side by elite troops, like the grenadiers, created some confusion in the interpretation of drill as given in the 1791 French regulations, which were never officially revised to accommodate this relocation from the soldier's right side. The text at the head of this figure explains that "gray cords would securely maintain the shako cover; at the soldier's pleasure, they were wound around the shako and attached by a knot to the [hook in the slot into which fit the] plume."

The musket at left (annotated "white leather and brass fittings"), and in the hands of the left figure, shows unusual brass fittings, a feature normally reserved for guard units. It is possible that, although labeled as a *fusilier*, the soldier might be a "*Tirailleur* [literally "marksman," but here meaning "skirmisher"] of the Young Guard."

The figure on the right shows a back view of a grenadier. The annotation notes: his "knapsack of cowhide," that "some cartridge pouch flaps were dressed with [that is, protected by] a linen cover," and "the shako plume tied to the *sabre-briquet* scabbard in a black, waxed cloth" (to protect it).

The text below the figures explains that "In the rain, on campaign, the [shako cover's] neck-flap was lowered down around the collar, around which it was firmly tied. The same for officers" (see Plate 129 depicting this).

Brun N° 31 from Bommer I, 13 >

