



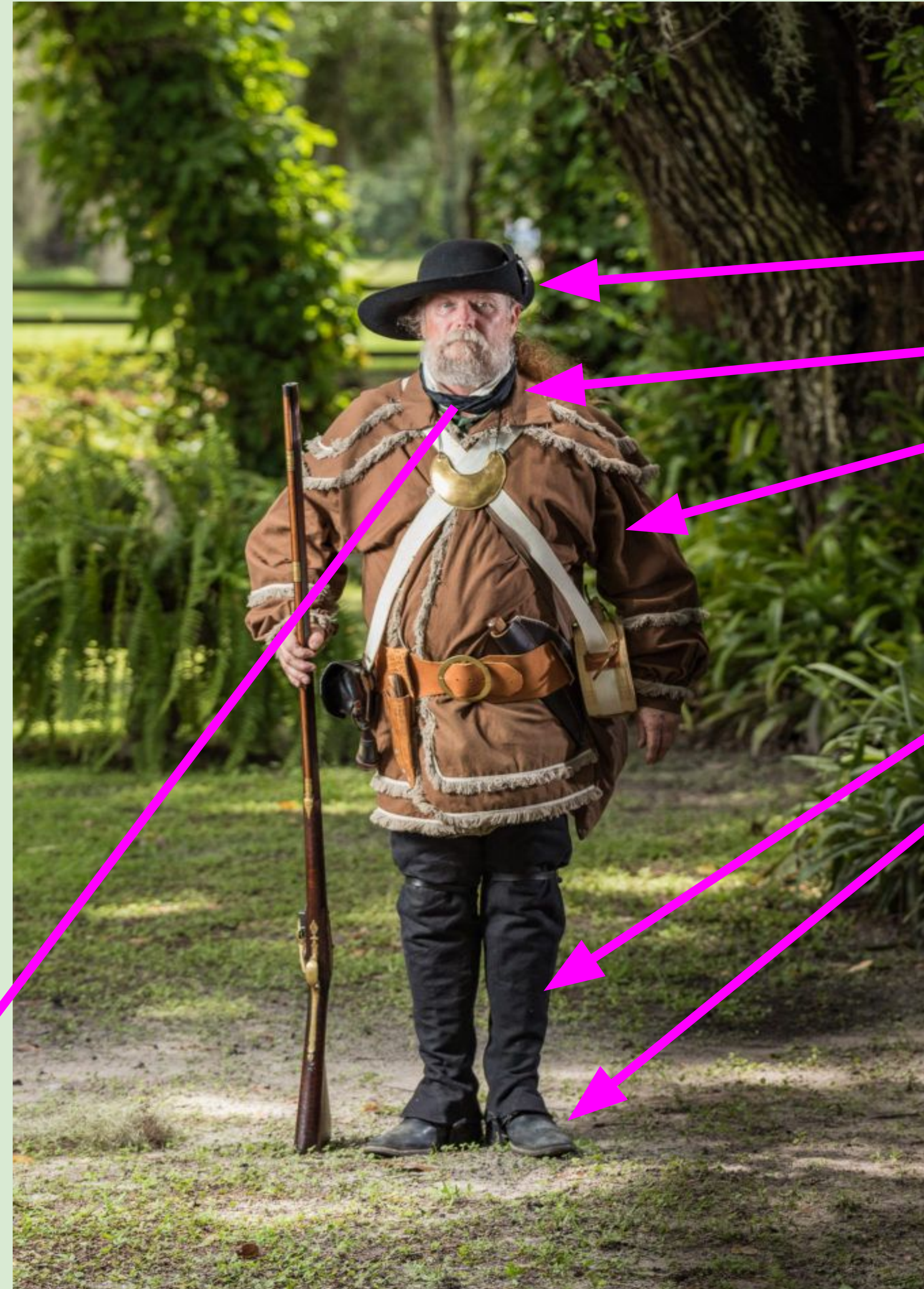
# Textiles of Revolutionary Soldiers in Florida

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## References:

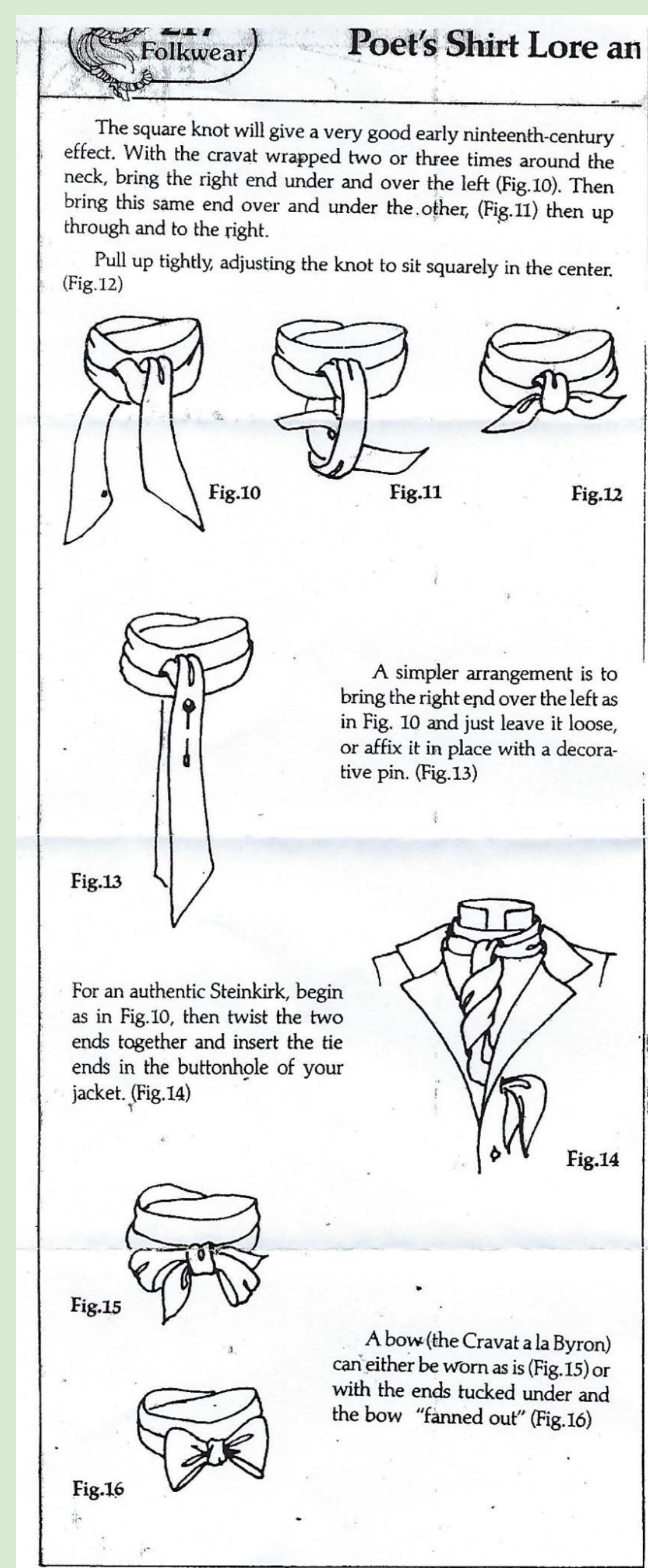
### Introduction:

- In 1776, a loyalist militia, the East Florida Rangers, aimed to protect the British colonists of Eastern Florida during the American Revolution. Fundamental to defending the colony from Patriot forces, specifically in St. Augustine Florida, this militia emphasizes how their unique hierarchical patterns, militia structures, and symbolic attire affected their success within the southern borders of North America.
- East Florida Rangers' attire was influenced by both British military standards and frontier practicality.
  - It is known that loyalist militias often wore cool, earthy green and brown coats to distinguish themselves from the vibrant red-coated British.
- Published sources have covered the general dress of British loyalist militias. Documentation on the East Florida Rangers' uniforms remains minimal and is up for various interpretations.
  - Existing primary sources mostly focus on East Florida Rangers' military actions, rather than their attire.
- This research aims to bridge the gaps in knowledge about the East Florida Rangers' attire by analyzing diaries, illustrations, and contacting other researchers. By identifying common trends found within loyalists and considering Florida's unique environmental conditions, this study seeks to provide a clearer picture of what these soldiers likely wore. The findings will contribute to a broader understanding of the priorities of the loyalists in this era.



Typical Uniform of an East Florida Ranger  
Courtesy of the Historic Florida Militia, Inc.

Tying instructions for the black scarf. Rangers were considered to be well-dressed if they had a black scarf. Courtesy of the Historic Florida Militia, Inc.



### Methodology:

- Within this study, I utilized both primary and secondary sources to examine the role of garments during the American Revolution in British St. Augustine.
- Primary sources used include magazines, newspapers, diaries, and wills which provided firsthand accounts of how clothing influenced wartime experiences and economic exchanges.
- The use of secondary sources offered historical interpretations and analyses that contextualized these findings.
- The research involved reviewing these documents to identify recurring themes and patterns related to garment production, distribution, and usage.
- The analysis portion was focused on drawing connections between clothing, military strategy, and trade networks, highlighting the broader impact of textiles on the Revolutionary War in St. Augustine.

### Findings on Garments in Warfare & Trade:

#### • Military Clothing & Identity:

- East Florida Rangers wore a combination of frontier, colonial militia, and practical attire rather than standard British uniforms.
- Uniform components included:
  - Hat (brown or black) with a deer fur cockade and pin.
  - Linen or cotton shirt (off-white or natural color).
  - Black leather stock worn around the neck.
  - Wool coat with contrasting lapels, cuffs, and collar, or a rifleman's frock (brown, gray, or green).
  - Linen or wool waistcoat.
  - Wool, linen, or cotton breeches gathered just below the knee.
  - Stockings and gaiters (canvas or leather).
  - Leather shoes.
- The Seminoles wore scarlet coats, steel knives, hatchets, silver armbands, and gorgets.

#### • Military Operations & Supply Chain:

- The East Florida Rangers, established in 1776, consisted of approximately 130 men organized into four companies.
- Duties included patrolling frontiers, securing settlements, gathering intelligence, and conducting raids into Georgia.
- The unit was reorganized in 1779 as the King's Rangers and incorporated into the provincial infantry.
- Clothing and supplies for the Rangers were provided by the British military, with soldiers receiving one shilling per day but supplying their own horses.

#### • Textile Trade & Economic Data:

- Textiles accounted for over 60% of British exports to the American colonies between 1700 and 1774.
- Woolen textiles, including worsteds and woollens, were the most valuable exports.
- Customs data classified woolen exports into approximately 45 distinct categories, with 18 types typically shipped to North America.
- In addition to woollens, the colonies imported minikin bays, frieze, Spanish cloth and Kendal cottons, and kersey.

### Significance of Research:

#### • Impact of Trade During War & Beyond:

- Trade impacted military efforts with textiles being a key commodity for both combat readiness and economic stability within British St. Augustine.
- The East Florida Rangers relied on imported textiles and supplies for uniforms, reinforcing the connection between war logistics and trade networks.
- The provisioning of troops required international supply chains, showcasing how economic policies influenced wartime outcomes.

#### • Relevance to Modern Trade Policies:

- The historical trade of textiles and military supplies parallels current discussions on global exports, tariffs, and supply chain dependencies in general.
- Just as colonial economies were shaped by import taxes and trade restrictions, today's tariff policies impact international commerce and economic stability.
- Understanding how trade influenced military success in the past provides insight into how nations should navigate economic issues today.