

Purpose

The goal of the inspection process is not for an inspector to tell you what clothing is “right” and what is “wrong.” Instead, it’s a chance to have someone else check your documentation and provide feedback as to whether the pieces you wear are adequately supported by documentation. Your unit’s GIRF (general impression reference form) and your IIF (individual inspection form) are to provide an inspector with sufficient information to evaluate your research and impression. The method of evaluation is a comparison between your garment/accoutrement and the research you present to support the item. Your garment/accoutrement must match your documentation to pass inspection.

General Impression Reference Form

Each unit is required to complete a GIRF. If this is your unit’s first inspection, please use the form on the NWTa website. If you have been inspected previously using earlier forms, you are free to continue to use them. Please remember, however, that each item is being inspected, regardless of whether the item passed or failed a previous inspection.

For the general uniform equipment, and gear, you may either list your sources on the last page of the GIRF or you may include them under each individual numbered paragraph.

If your unit has been inspected previously, double check to make sure that your unit’s impression still conforms to your unit’s GIRF. If it does not (because of subsequent research or changes in the unit’s impression), please make sure that your GIRF reflects those changes. Your unit will be inspected against your unit’s GIRF. Therefore, it is advisable to make sure the GIRF is complete and current.

You may either write in the boxes of a printed version of the form, or you may type directly into the computer form. In either case, the GIRF must be provided digitally to the IG, so handwritten forms must be scanned prior to inspection.

The Individual Inspection Form

All individuals, whether military, militia, civilians with the army or civilians independent of the army, must have an IIF and a biography. If this is your first inspection, please use the form provided on the NWTa website. If you have been previously inspected using the earlier forms, you may continue to use them if you wish. However, as with the GIRF, each item is being inspected, regardless of whether the item passed or failed previous inspections. Therefore, it is advisable to revisit your work prior to each inspection. Additions to research and more availability of primary source material means that you may need to change your form.

For soldiers in uniformed units, you may reference the unit’s GIRF for standardize gear. Your IIF should, however, list separately any non-standard items. For example, if all soldiers in your unit wear the same shirt and the shirt is adequately documented in the GIRF, you may list the GIRF as your source. If you have any additional or personal items, such as pipes, knives, musket tools, etc., you must list them separately on the IIF.

While children need not complete the biographical section, you will need separate forms to document each child’s clothing and accoutrements.

Your Biography

Please attach your biography to your form. The reason for this is two-fold. First, for many impressions, knowing your persona's background will aid you in selecting appropriate garments and accoutrements. Second, knowing your biography will help your inspector better evaluate your documentation and items. Your biography should be as complete as possible, and should be compatible with your unit's history and with your spouse's impression, if applicable. Include your assumed name, if any.

Civilians with military units need to provide reason for being with the unit. Marital status is not a complete reason; please explain why you have chosen or were pressed to reside with a military unit. Consult your unit history when creating your impression. Ideally, your biography should be documented. Children do not need individual biographies, but may be included on their parents' and are welcome to submit their own.

You may wish to include: (1) your place and date of birth, (2) your residence and occupation prior to the war (and, if applicable, your spouse's), (3) class or social status, (4) nationality, ethnicity, or other identifiers, and (5) length of time and occupation with your unit. Length is entirely up to you – take as much space as you need to fulfill the goals of the biography.

Items and Sources

Use the form to describe and document your clothing and accoutrements. List each item (unless two or more are exactly identical) separately. Remember to document both the fabric and the construction of garments. **Patterns, such as printed florals, must be documented in addition to the garment's construction.** Accessories, accoutrements, and equipment necessary for your persona must also be included.

Use the "sources" space for your documentation. Preferably, all documentation should be based on a primary source. Secondary sources may be used, but a primary source "trumps" a secondary one, and you will be encouraged to find primary source documentation for any items documented with secondary sources. Primary sources can include extant garments, original paintings, cartoons, or other drawings created during (not after) the period you are portraying, and written descriptions such as in diaries or runaway ads.

Using any standard citation method (MLA, APA, Chicago Manual) will yield a complete citation. Essentially, you must name your source and show where another person could find it. If a primary source such as a painting is reproduced in a book or article, you need to show both the original source (the painting) and its location (the book or article) in your citation. Both the original source and its location must be shown in order to allow your peers access to this information. Showing only the book your extant garment is shown in is not sufficient as it shows only the location; stating only the original runaway ad is not sufficient as another person could not reasonably track this down without the book or URL the ad was reproduced in. For instance:

Original Author. "Title of work or description of garment" in Book, author (City, State of publishing co: Publishing Company) Year published, page number/s.

Camp gear, canvas, furniture and dishes

The Quartermaster General has requested that camp inspections take place at the same time as the unit's inspection. During the camp inspection, we will make suggestions on improving your camp impression and may request that certain questionable items be put away until after colors unless documentation for them can be produced.

Any standardized camp gear used by your unit members or gear that is owned by the unit itself should be listed on the GIRF. For example, if members of your unit use identical pewter mugs, documenting pewter mugs in your unit's GIRF will cover all your unit members' use of pewter mugs.

This use of the GIRF can apply to items such as:

- Canvas (tents, dining fly, bell of arms, marquees, etc.):
- Furniture (tables, seating, etc.)
- Campaign boxes, crates, etc.
- Fire irons and other fire equipment
- Cookware, eating ware, and drink ware (pots, pans, utensils, plates, bowls, mugs, etc.)
- Buckets

If you have individual gear that is not used by everyone else in the unit, as it is individual to your impression, please document that item separately on your IIF. The new GIRF and IIF (available on www.nwta.com) have sections for camp items. Feel free to use those pages of the new forms when documenting your camp items.

Please note, due to our organization's encampment policy, if your unit is not encamped during your period of portrayal and therefore does not have documented encampment equipment, you will not be restricted from using such items provided they are documented for the period. For example, if historically your unit did not use tents but you would like to use tents at events, the tents you use should be documented for the period even if they are not documented for your unit. Likewise, tables, chairs, cookware, fire irons, and other camp equipment should be documented for the period if they are going to be visible to the public.

If you customarily provide open packs or gear for the public to come and see or handle in a direct public display or presentation, the items that will be proactively displayed should be individually documented on your IIF.

If you are in question of what type of documentation is needed for a particular situation or item, please reach out to the Quartermaster General prior to the inspection. At the time of your inspection, a representative from the Quartermaster General will be present to inspect your camp items and documentation.

At this time, your unit will not “fail” inspection because of inadequate documentation for your camp gear. We would like to start seeing camp gear on your GIRF/IIF but understand that this is a new requirement. However, we will make suggestions on approving your camp impression and may request that certain items are put away until after colors unless documentation can be produced.

Appendices

You are required to have all of your reference materials available to the inspector at the time of your inspection. You may choose to bring photocopies or books with you. You are allowed to scan hard copies of books or articles or copy digital pictures and text files. If you do photocopy sections of articles or books, please photocopy the front and back of the title page (making sure the author, title of the work, publishing company, and year published is visible).

If you have multiple sources for the same item, you may choose to copy only or two sources that provide complete documentation. Feel free to list the other sources for future reference.

Make sure that your documentation provides a complete explanation for your item. For example, you may have one source that describes a person of your status/location wearing that item, another source that describes the item's construction, and a third that describes the fabric or material of which the item is made.

Suggested Format

Many inspectees find it useful to place all of their references and copies of documents in a binder for the inspection. This also allows you to have a permanent record of your sources and documentation for future reference and inspections.

If you decide to keep your reference materials digitally (scan in copies of the relevant documentation), please make sure that a copy is available for the inspector during the inspection. The inspectors are not required to bring laptops or computers with them to inspections. *You* must provide such equipment if needed to review your documentation and forms.