

# THE UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT OF THE LOCAL MILITIA

In this area of Upper Canada, the sedentary militia (all eligible men) and the flank companies (the more able bodied and trained of the sedentary militia) would have served in their civilian clothes. However, some officers would have had their own regulation uniforms made. Thus, a column of Northumberland militia would have looked like the picture below. Otherwise, their weapons and equipment were the same as the professionals or the professionally trained Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada (IMUC). Local men, including Henry Ruttan, volunteered for the IMUC.

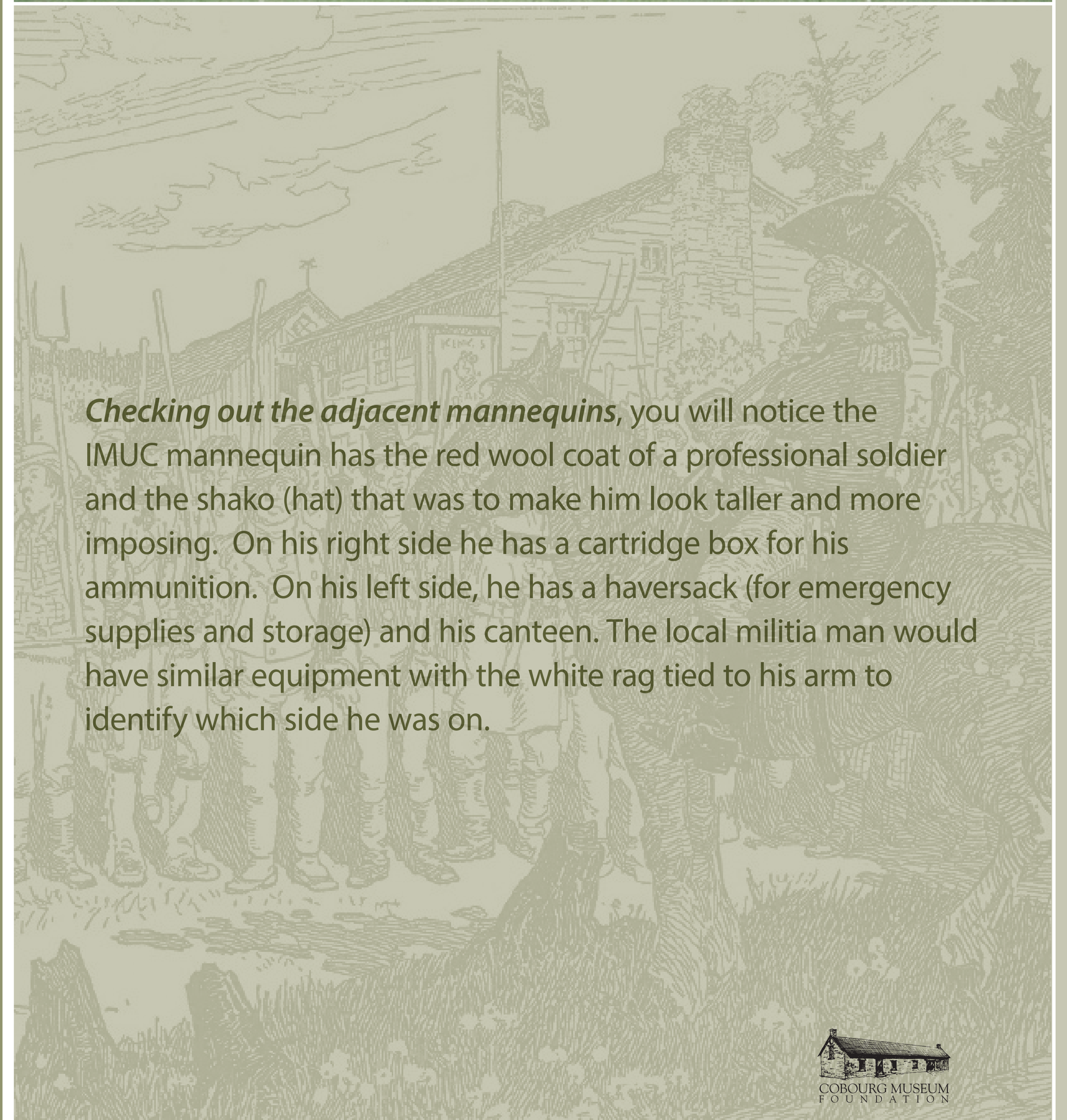


The picture to the right shows several aspects of the professionals. The officer half way down the line has the distinctive uniform, sword, and sash of an officer. The sergeant at the right has the stripes on his right shoulder but also a distinctive sash. Otherwise, his appearance is the same as the privates. From this angle, it is possible to see the privates' haversacks, canteens, and their bayonets.

The redcoats (including the IMUC) are firing in two lines, company (group) by company from the far end of the line to the near end of the line (foreground). Strange to modern eyes, this formation makes sense for the time. Lines allowed all the men to shoot and guaranteed at least some of their unreliable flintlocks would fire. The tight formation allowed officers to give orders that could be heard.



These soldiers, and the locals, would have been armed with a Brown Bess musket and bayonet (pictured above). Tests have proven this gun could fire a round ball of lead 1.9 cm (3/4") in diameter through 5 sheets of 1.9 cm (3/4") plywood (= 9.5 cm or 5 3/4" in total). However, the flintlock firing system means the gun can fail to fire, especially in humid conditions. The triangular shaped bayonet was attached to the end of the musket and could inflict horrendous wounds that were difficult to treat.



*Checking out the adjacent mannequins, you will notice the IMUC mannequin has the red wool coat of a professional soldier and the shako (hat) that was to make him look taller and more imposing. On his right side he has a cartridge box for his ammunition. On his left side, he has a haversack (for emergency supplies and storage) and his canteen. The local militia man would have similar equipment with the white rag tied to his arm to identify which side he was on.*