

CIVIL WAR CIVILIANS OF SPOTTSYLVANIA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES AND OVERVIEW

Members of CWCS portray average middle class American civilians in the central Virginia region from 1857 to 1867 – rural, town, and working folks, being the most appropriate; and occasionally refugees.

We take pride in our goal to provide the most accurate impression possible from a modern vantage point and to teach the public what was most common. In not doing so, cheats the public out of a true and correct education.

We are a “progressive” living history organization, recognizing that none of us can be perfectly authentic. However, we strive for authentic accuracy and are committed to improving our living history impression through research and findings. Research should be from primary sources.

Do not let our Standards and Guidelines scare you or keep you from participating. Authenticity is not a destination but a journey, and there’s an exception to every rule; never say “never” and never say “always”. Start small and build an appropriate wardrobe and impression. The easiest thing to do is to ask before you buy.

Living history scenarios are the one time that clothes and accessories do make or break the impression. Your impression depends on your profession, station in life, age, or other circumstances.

Clothing is only part of the picture; we must also understand the culture and social environment that would be the framework for the average American in the mid-19th century. Again, and most important, do your homework, research.

Act and dress your age; do your research to make sure you’re dressing age appropriate.

Your historic wardrobe is a major investment. This is the best argument for doing things right the first time. A slim budget cannot afford to be replacing items because they are inaccurate.

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Modern eyewear, footwear, and hair can be some of the most blatant offenders to “break” the period impression. Eyewear and footwear are usually the two most expensive reenacting attire items. Because they can truly break the impression, they are considered really important, and should therefore be some of your first acquisitions.

Eyewear: there are many eyewear companies that can put modern lens in reproduction frames at a reasonable cost. Reproduction frames are fairly reasonable and can be easily obtained. Frame styles that are very similar to period correct are usually available also from eyewear companies and are totally acceptable.

Footwear: Please, no Hush Puppies; try to find shoes that look very close to period correct as possible, OR purchase reproductions from reliable sutlers or purveyors of period items. Barefoot impressions are not acceptable.

Beware of sutlers; DO NOT rely on them for accuracy, research before you buy. Just because they’re selling something doesn’t make it correct.

Hair: the easiest to achieve. Hairstyles of the period are readily available with a minimum of research. You have only to try a few to see what works for you.

No post-1867 items are to be visible at any time during an event. This includes modern bedding, coolers, food wrappers, drink cans, speckle ware cookware, non-period representation furniture, cell phones, electronic devices, cigarettes, cigars or pipes, or other equipment of any kind. Think about what you’re bringing with you to an event.

Military uniforms are allowed only in the context of a valid scenario.

No alcohol or illegal substances, no vulgar or abusive behavior will be permitted.

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At no time, while participating with or representing CWCS, will anyone approach any other individual for the purpose of correcting or commenting on the inaccuracy of their attire, behavior or impression. Don't ask for a critique of your own attire or impression if you're not prepared to hear the answer.

If you have any questions or doubts about your attire or impression, please ask before you turnout for an event; that way we can all put our best foot forward when we meet the public.

CIVIL WAR CIVILIANS OF SPOTTSYLVANIA

**I have thoroughly read and accept CWCS's Standards and Guidelines as a condition of my membership in the organization.

Signature

Date

Attachments:

Getting Started (Vanna Lewis) – 9 Pages

Clothing Guidelines of the Hobby (to be aspired to) – 5 Pages