

## Waistcoats & Hunting shirts

Hunting shirts, or smocks like wagoner and farmer smocks, are outer garments worn to protect your good clothing from getting soiled. For example, when hunting the hunting shirt will protect your waistcoat from getting blood on it when gutting a deer. J.F.D. Smythe describes a hunting shirt of 1770 as “ a hunting shirt, somewhat resembling a wagoner’s frock.” Here is a man from the 18th century describing a hunting shirt as a wagoner’s frock, something to be worn over one’s clothing. At an 18th century event last year, I confronted a fellow reenactor about him wearing his waistcoat on the outside of his hunting shirt. He said that he didn’t have any documentation to support this but he just thought it looked cool. If we are going to give an accurate portrayal of the 18th century we must do the research to back it up. In a recent article in Muzzleloader “Into Western Waters, The Journals of Nicholas Cresswell and James Nourse, part 1” by Ted Franklin Belue, Mr. Belue states “Nourse stripped off the linen shirt that he had pulled over his flannel weskit to keep it dry,”

In another article in Muzzleloader Magazine’s The Book of Buckskinning VII “Indian – Influenced Woodsmen of the Cane” by Ted Franklin Belue, he quotes from Draper (1A:46) “On Christmas day 1784, George Bedinger and John Stovall were hunting on Green River. Bedinger toted a bearskin knapsack. Both wore buckskin hunting shirts and leather breeches. Their leggings were crud, a hasty job...Bedinger wore a faded camlet jacket of red wool and silk “that had seen better days”, a green baize shirt, a cocked hat from the Revolutionary War and deerskin moccasins stuffed with beech and white oak leaves.” Obviously Bedinger didn’t wear the wool jacket and wool shirt over his hunting shirt.

In conclusion, I would like to say that if we don’t do the research to back up what we do then we are missing the point for this hobby. Learning and teaching what we learn.

Your Most Humble Servant,  
Ronald W. Poppe