



### **WWI Rifle Mittens**

This is an historically accurate pattern brought up -to-date for the contemporary knitter. The original pattern is Rifle Mittens for Infantry on page 67 in *Knitting and Sewing: How to Make Useful Articles for Men in the Army and Navy* by Maud Churchill Nicoll, George H. Doran Company (1918).

Infantry men needed protection from the cold but required bare trigger finger and thumb in order to shoot. This accessory, worked in fingering weight wool, provided warmth without compromising tactile sensation.



### **SIZE**

**Men's small/Women's medium** using fingering weight yarn

**Men's medium** using Sport weight yarn

**Men's large** using DK weight yarn

### **FINISHED MEASUREMENTS**

**Men's small:** 11 inches from cuff to end of finger (4 inches of ribbing and 7 inches of palm and fingers). 3.75 inches across palm at base of fingers.

**Men's medium/large:** 12 inches from cuff to end of finger (4 inches of ribbing and 8 inches of palm and fingers). 4 inches across palm at base of fingers.

### **YARN**

**Men's small:** Karabella Yarns, Aurora 4 [100% merino; 196 yds/50 g skein]; Color 08, fingering weight, 1 skein for both right- and left-hand mittens

**Men's medium/large:** KnitPicks Swish DK [100% Superwash Merino Wool; 123 yards /112 m per 50g skein]; color: Camel Heather; 2 skeins.

Caution: Since this is a clothing item for the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Costume Department, use fiber equivalent to a historic project, i.e. 100% wool in fingering, sport or DK weight . Khaki or tan is the appropriate color for WWI knitted accessories for soldiers.

### **NEEDLES**

**Men's small:** U.S. size 1.5 (2.50 mm) for base of hand and thumb gusset, U.S. size 2 (2.75) for cuff ribbing

**Men's medium/large:** U.S. size 4 (3.50 mm) for base of hand and thumb gusset, U.S. size 5 (3.75 mm) for cuff ribbing

### **SUPPLIES**

Stitch Markers – one different from others to mark beginning of round; Yarn or Tapestry Needle; Waste yarn (different color of fingering weight yarn) to hold out of work stitches.

### **GAUGE**

**Men's small** using Fingering weight yarn: 28 stitches = 4 inches

**Men's medium/large** using Sport or DK weight yarn: 22 stitches = 4 inches

## PATTERN ABBREVIATIONS

k	knit	m1L	(make one left leaning stitch) lift bar between stitches with right needle, transfer to left needle, knit into front of bar.
p	purl	k2tog	knit two stitches together
PM	place marker	p2tog	purl two stitches together
SM	slip marker	k2tbl	knit two stitches together through the back loops
st	stitch		
sts	stitches		
m1R	(make one right leaning stitch) lift bar between stitches with left needle, knit back of bar		

## PATTERN

### Ribbing

Using U.S. 2 needles (2.50 mm), cast on 60 stitches with long tail cast on method. Join into a circle, taking care not to twist the stitches. Place a unique marker to indicate beginning of round. Knit 2, purl 2 for 4 inches.

Decrease round: [(k2, p2) 2 x, k2, p2tog] 5x.

### Base of Hand and Thumb Gusset

Switch to size U.S. 1.5 (2.5 mm) needles.

Row 1: (k1, p1) 2 times, k rest of row.

Row 2: k1, p1, PM, k1, m1R, PM, p1, k rest of row.

Row 3: k1, p1, SM, k2, SM, p1, k rest of row.

Row 4: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k2, m1L, SM, p1, k rest of row.

Row 5 & 6: k1, p1, SM, k4, SM, p1, k rest of row.

Row 7: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k4, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 8 & 9: k1, p1, SM, k6, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 10: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k6, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 11 & 12: k1, p1, SM, k8, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 13: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k8, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 14 & 15: k1, p1, SM, k10, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 16: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k10, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 17 & 18: k1, p1, SM, k12, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 19: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k12, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 20 & 21: k1, p1, SM, k14, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 22: k1, p1, SM, m1R, k14, m1L, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 23: k1, p1, SM, k16, SM, p1, k to end of row.

Row 24: slip first stitch to right needle, remove next 18 stitches ( p stitch + 16 k stitches + p stitch) onto waste yarn, removing stitch markers as you go along.

Row 25: Slip first st on right needle back onto left needle and knit it. Then cast on 4 stitches with backward loop method, k rest of row.

## Upper Hand

**LEFT HAND:** Knit 14 rows.

Row 15: k44, transfer next 16 stitches onto waste yarn. Cast on 2 stitches with backward loops.

**RIGHT HAND:** Knit 14 rows.

Row 15: Transfer 16 stitches onto waste yarn. Cast on 2 stitches. (If using double pointed needles, distribute stitches on 3 needles so that there are 14 stitches on each.)

Knit 15 rows.

### Decrease section for three finger mitten

Row 1: k19, k2tbl, PM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 2: k all stitches.

Row 3: k 18, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 4: k all stitches.

Row 5: k 17, k2tbl SM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 6: k all stitches.

Row 7: k16, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 8: k all stitches.

Row 9: k15, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 10: k all stitches.

Row 11: k14, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k to end of row.

Row 12: k all stitches.

Row 13: k13, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k rest of row.

Row 14: k all stitches.

Row 15: k12, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k rest of row.

Row 16: k all stitches.

Row 17: k11, k2tbl, SM, k3tog, k rest of row.

Row 18: k all stitches

Row 19: k10, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k rest of row.

Row 20: k9, k2tbl, SM, k2tog, k rest of row. (20 sts on needle.)

Use Kitchner stitch to join last 20 stitches or cut yarn, draw yarn needle through stitches and gather. Secure end of yarn inside mitten.



### Completing Pointer Finger

Transfer 16 stitches from waste yarn and pick up 4 sts on vertical edge of mitten. Pick up 4 sts across body of mitten opening. Pick up 4 sts along the other vertical edge of mitten. (28 stitches) K2, p2 ribbing for 6 rounds. Bind off in pattern.

### Completing Thumb

Transfer 18 stitches from waste yarn and pick up 3 sts on vertical edge of mitten. Pick up 4 sts across body of mitten opening. Pick up 3 sts along the other vertical edge of mitten. (28 stitches) K2, p2 ribbing for 6 rounds. Bind off in pattern.

## FINISHING

Block the mittens by steaming with an iron or wet the entire mitten and allow to dry flat. Do not iron the ribbing.

Here is the original pattern as published in *Knitting and Sewing: How to Make Useful Articles for Men in the Army and Navy*.

### RIFLE MITTENS FOR INFANTRY

4 steel knitting needles, pointed at both ends, size 13. 3 ounces of 3-ply wheeling, or 4-ply double knitting wool, in khaki colour or navy blue.

Proceed exactly as you do for gloves till you are ready to tie off the stitches for the fingers.

Tie off 12 stitches for the first finger (to the left of the 4 cast on stitches if for the left hand mitten, to the right of them if for the right hand one), tie off the 4 cast on stitches as well.

Continue knitting and at the end of the last needle cast on 2 stitches, join up the round of 42 stitches, divide them evenly upon 3 needles, 14 on each needle, and knit plain for 15 rounds.

In the next and first narrowing round, knit 19 stitches, this will bring you to the outside edge of the hand. Knit 2 stitches together in the back loops of the stitches, knit 2 stitches together in the front loops of the stitches and knit plain to the end of the round.

Knit 1 plain round.

Narrow again in the round, as above, and knit 1 plain round.

Repeat the narrowing round and the plain round till you have decreased 14 stitches.

Now narrow 4 rounds in succession. You will have 20 stitches left on the needles. Either finish off with the darning weave (see page 131), or break off the wool, thread it through a blunt darning-needle, run it round through all the 20 stitches twice, pull up the wool and fasten it off securely.

Pick up the 16 tied off stitches for the 1st finger and pick up 4 stitches in the 2 cast on stitches, join

up the round and knit in a rib of knit 2 stitches and purl 2 stitches for 6 rounds. Cast off.

Pick up the 18 tied off thumb stitches and pick-up 4 stitches in the 4 cast on gusset stitches, join up the round, and knit 1 plain round, knitting in the 2 outside stitches of the gusset when you come to them.

Knit in a rib of knit 2 stitches and purl 2 stitches, for 6 rounds and cast off.

Fasten in all the ends securely and press the mitten, then pick up the inside with a teazle brush until it is soft and fleecy.

The Rifle Mitten measurements are:

Ribbing for the wrist ..... 4 inches.

Palm and fingers ..... 7 "

Length over all ..... 11 inches.



RIFLE MITTENS