

**National Civil War Association**

# **Dispatch**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**



**NCWA1863.org**

**P.O. Box 266, Santa Clara, California 95052**

**NEXT COMBINED BOARD MEETING:**

**Saturday, November 7, at 12:05 p.m.**

**Venue to be announced; details to follow.**

# NCWA ELECTION NOTICE FOR 2021

**OPEN POSITIONS:** President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Town Clerk.

**FEDERAL AND CONFEDERATE:** Colonel, Lt. Colonel, Major, Sergeant Major

All Candidate Statements, either nominations or statements of candidacy, must be submitted and received by me no later than November 1, 2020. Any statements received after that date will not be accepted and that candidate's name will not appear on the official ballot.

I would like to remind all incumbents who are standing for re-election that they must file a statement or their name will not appear on the ballot. These statements may be submitted by e-mail in clear text or Microsoft Word format or by U.S. mail to the following address:

Kevin Groom  
8835 Kona Way  
Orangevale, CA 95662  
(916) 988-3307  
graytar1@aol.com

Please send your statement formatted as you would like it printed. Excessively long statements may be edited for space.

A "Voters Guide" which will include the statements of the formal candidates will be posted in December.

In addition to the lists of formal candidates for each position and the statements related to their candidacy, this guide will include the directions for filing your ballot.

In accordance with our Club's rules I will be mailing ballots to all eligible club members, in the first part of December. This mailing will be made out individually to each eligible club member and will include the appropriate ballot(s) and the return envelope that must be used for returning the ballot(s).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, or would like to verify the receipt of any materials.

I would also like to thank everyone in advance for their cooperation.

Thank You,  
Kevin Groom  
Election Administrator

# CIVIL WAR SAILORS

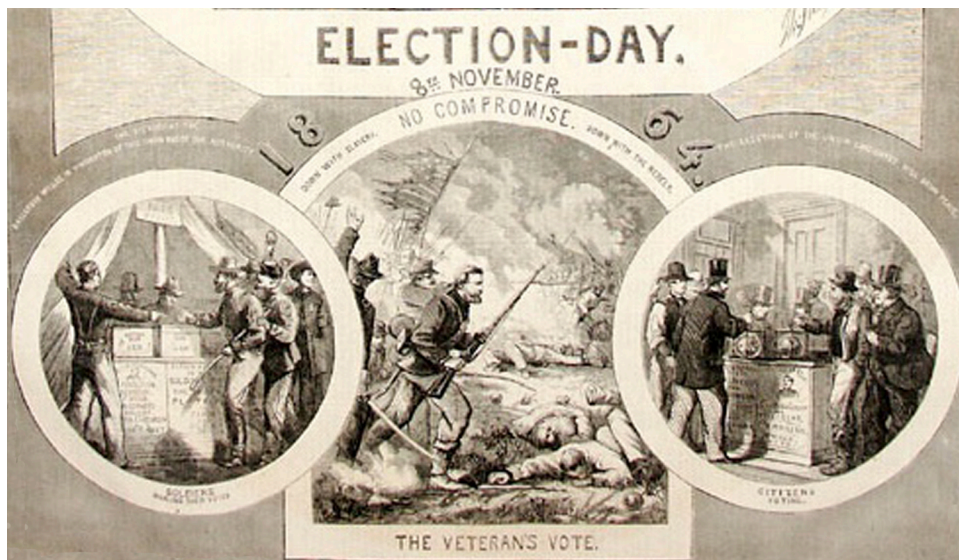
Cavalrymen were not the only warriors who went into battle as passengers, though they were far more plentiful than their "webfoot" counterparts. Throughout the Civil War the navies of both the North and the South suffered from a shortage of manpower. On both sides the demands of the armies were so persistent that there were never enough sailors, especially experienced men, to complete the crews of all the ships in service. This proved particularly true in the South, where the pool of available seamen was very small under the best of circumstances. Stephen Mallory, the Secretary of the Navy, got the Confederate Congress to pass a law in 1863 whereby any man serving in the army who volunteered for the navy was to be transferred. Mallory claimed that hundreds of men volunteered, but that their military commanders would not release them. In the North, trained seamen were diverted into the army by enlistment bonuses, by local competition to fill regiments, by a desire to try something different, and by the draft. Sometimes it became necessary in both the North and the South to divert soldiers into naval duty. Usually the soldiers were not too pleased by the assignment. Some became disciplinary problems or deserted, but a number adjusted to the demands of the war and gave a good account of themselves.

Source: "The Image of War:1861-1865, Volume IV, Fighting For Time" Article by Harold D. Langley



# HOW ABSENTEE VOTING FOR US TROOPS WON THE CIVIL WAR AND ENDED SLAVERY

*By Blake Stilwell*



(Library of Congress)

Few U.S. elections were more contentious and controversial than the one in 1864. Looking back at more than 100 years of history since, it might be difficult to imagine any outcome other than Abraham Lincoln winning in a landslide election.

But it was the votes of U.S. troops that put Lincoln over the top and forever changed the way Americans at war vote in elections.

In 1864, the future of the presidency wasn't certain. Lincoln was facing a re-election battle that seemed as brutal as the Union victory at Antietam just two years earlier -- and he was facing the architect of that victory, Gen. George B. McClellan.

Meanwhile, many of Lincoln's policies were unpopular in the United States. Some Americans believed a negotiated peace was the best way to end the Civil War. Others scoffed at the Enrollment Act, the Civil War-era draft that not only conscripted American men but allowed rich men to pay someone to take their place in the service. Some were even outraged by Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, fearing that freeing slaves in rebel states would lead to universal emancipation.

While Lincoln exercised his power to prosecute the war, he also fought battles in the Republican Party to remove him as its chosen candidate. Those attempts, of course, failed, but it made the prospect of a general election defeat more real for the wartime president.

McClellan, who commanded the Union Army at the outset of the Civil War, declared his candidacy for president in 1864, running as a Democrat while on active duty. He was unhappy with how Lincoln and his Secretary of War Edwin Stanton were managing the fight. He had thoughts of his own about how to run the Army and the war it was fighting.

Democrats, however, were willing to negotiate a peace with the Confederacy. The Republicans were ready to see the war through to the end. Meanwhile, many questioned why the U.S. would have an election at all. Lincoln made sure that a democratic election happened, even during wartime, whatever the cost -- even though he was sure he would lose.



McClellan was the front-runner from the moment he was nominated. Democrats labeled Lincoln a "widow-maker," and spread false information declaring the president was in favor of mixed-race marriages, among other political tricks. He and Stanton did what they could to keep Lincoln in the race.

From the start of Lincoln's administration, Stanton had not been a big fan of the president. He thought of Honest Abe as less of a statesman and more of a country bumpkin. But Lincoln admired Stanton and made him his war secretary. As the war dragged on, the two men began to work closely with one another, even if they didn't always see eye to eye.

One thing they did agree on was their mutual disdain for McClellan and the general's inactivity at the front. Stanton and Lincoln both believed he should be replaced, and he soon was.

It was Stanton's idea to create an absentee voting system. He agreed with Lincoln's principles that a democratic society fighting for its life should include all the legal voters who wished to vote. He instituted a system that was ultimately left up to the states to regulate but allowed soldiers deployed to the front lines to vote in their local, state and federal elections.

Deployed U.S. troops vote through mail-in ballots today. (U.S. Army)

Twenty-five states would change their laws to allow soldiers to vote while away, either at a field station in their military encampment or by mail. Everyone else had to be tethered to their local polling place. The abrupt change in voting laws created a maelstrom in the 1864 election. Suddenly, soldiers with experience could comment on the candidates' war performances.

Was Lincoln giving the troops everything they really needed to win the war? Was McClellan a dithering coward while commander of the Union Army? These kinds of statements gave rise to a number of legal challenges and lawsuits that disrupted elections all over the Union. For Lincoln, it was anything but a sure bet.

McClellan was widely expected to win the popular vote among the Army of the Potomac. He was, after all, their commanding general, and the men knew him well. With the Democratic Party's platform supporting a negotiated end to the war and Lincoln's Republican Party dedicated to the Confederacy's defeat, the vote within the Army could mean a choice between life or death for many soldiers.

And the summer of 1864 was a terrible time for the Union Army. Union forces were turned back at Lynchburg, Monocacy and at the Battle of the Crater. But August saw a turn in the tide for the Union's chances at victory and, along with it, Lincoln's re-election. Union forces won strategic victories at Mobile Bay, the Shenandoah Valley and Atlanta, striking killer blows to the South's supply system.

The Confederacy's only chance would be a negotiated peace with a McClellan victory. But even McClellan tossed out that part of the Democratic Party platform. It wasn't enough to win the election.

When November came, McClellan's Army vote didn't materialize. Lincoln won 78% of the military's vote and 55% of the popular vote. The former general won only three states—Kentucky, Delaware and New Jersey, with an electoral college tally of 212-21 in Lincoln's favor. Lincoln even won areas of the Confederacy occupied by the Union Army that allowed citizens to vote.

It was a mandate from the Northern states, the only ones allowed to cast votes in the election. The Confederacy and the institution of slavery had to go. In January 1865, Congress passed the 13th Amendment, ending slavery.

Lincoln was inaugurated for his second term on March 4, 1865. Little more than a month later, the Union captured the Confederate capital of Richmond and accepted Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House.

*From **Military Life***

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# THE REBEL BLANKET ROLL

The Rebel Blanket Roll is one of the most versatile and efficient rigs for carrying personal belongings and limited amounts of food in the field. This handy arrangement is as old as man's urge to travel and has been utilized in some form or other, at some time or other, by nearly every army in the world. So calling it a "rebel blanket roll" is more a tribute to its widespread use during the American Civil War than an accurate statement.

It is a rare thing that has no negative aspects, and the blanket roll is no exception. While it is quick and simple to make, it cannot be modified to carry the large quantities of food and equipment needed for long campaigns. It is comfortable, easy to shed in an emergency, and offers a minimum of restrictions on normal movement. The equal distribution of weight front-to-back and side-to-side helps to prevent fatigue.

The principle applied here is the utilization of the blanket as a carrier. This is followed by a careful, objective selection of the articles to be transported, and a logical method of packing them.

First, spread the blanket out. Distribute your belongings across the middle third of the blanket's long dimension. Starting about six inches from each end, all rigid items such as canned goods, tools, etc., are placed along the left side of this center portion, with about an eight-inch space in the middle. Only soft, bendable items should be put in this center section. Other soft items are placed to the right of the hard objects.

When all items have been placed, the left third of the blanket is folded over the center section. Then the right third is folded over the center. (*Figure 2*)

Before rolling the blanket into its final form, be sure to have two short lengths of rope handy. They will be used to tie off each end, and then to join the two ends together.

Now, grasp the rigid objects and begin to tightly roll the blanket over the softer items. Use your knees to maintain the compression as you roll.

After rolling the blanket into a compressed cylinder, tie each end about three inches in. Now bend the roll in the middle and tie the two lashings together. As needed, additional ties can be used at logical places between the two end ties.

The pack is placed on the back by inserting the right arm and shoulder and the head through the "horseshoe." The blanket roll rests on the left shoulder.

You may carry a tarp or shelter half as part of this rig. Just place it on the ground first. When the blanket roll is done, it is now relatively waterproof.

The poncho is also recommended for use with this arrangement. However, it should not be folded into the rig. The blanket roll should be made up and tied, then rolled in the poncho and just the ends of the poncho tied. This allows you access to the poncho without completely unmaking the blanket roll.

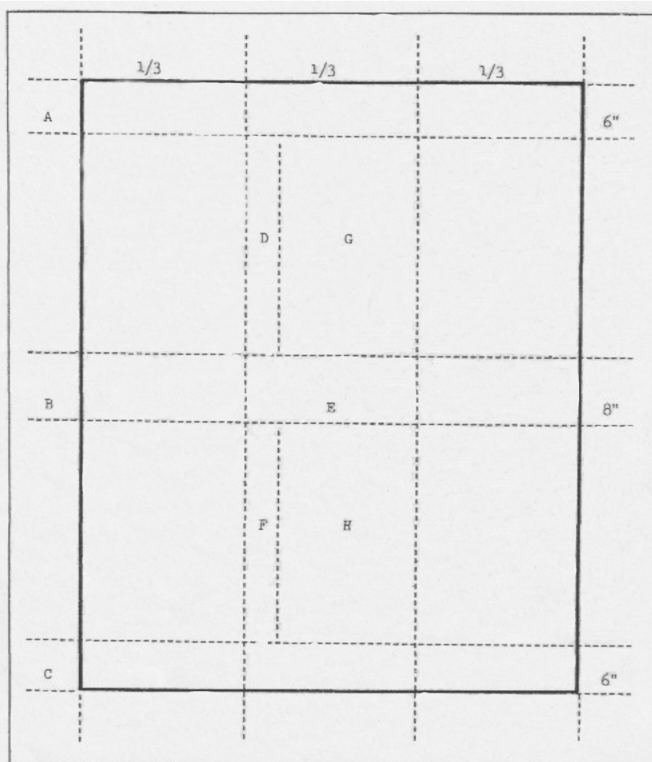


Figure 1. Placement of items on a standard single blanket.

- A & C Leave a 6-inch margin at each end for tying. No articles should be placed here.
- B Leave an 8-inch strip in the center for bending the finished roll to the carry position. Soft, flat items are placed here.
- D & F Fill with canned goods and other rigid items, starting with the most rigid at the outer ends and the more supple ones towards the center.
- E, G, & H Fill these areas with soft, flat, flexible items, with E being the thickest. This area provides the padding for your shoulder.

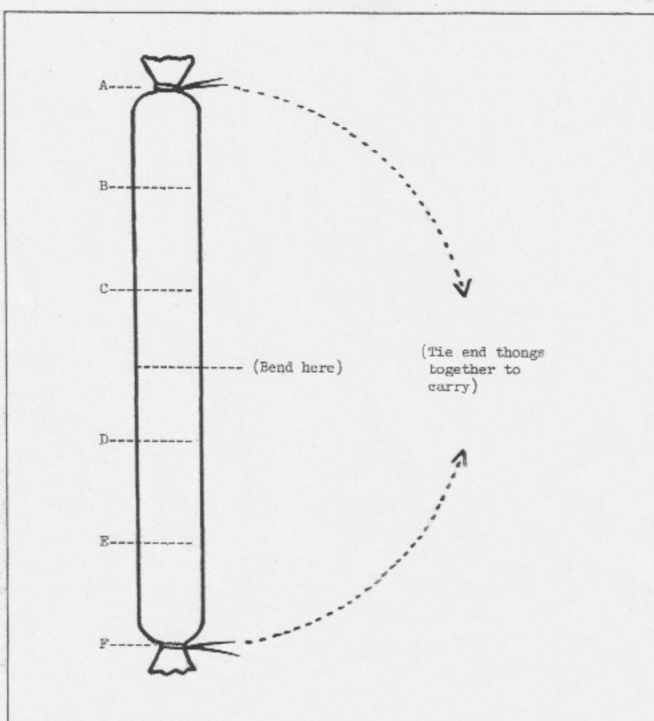


Figure 3. Tying the blanket roll.

- A & F Tie the ends securely to prevent articles from slipping out the end of the roll. Rope or thongs may be used.
- B - E Tie the roll tightly at such intervals as are necessary to maintain the shape and form, and to prevent slipping or settling of contents. Use as many extra ties as needed. Tent ropes may be used as long as they are not cut.

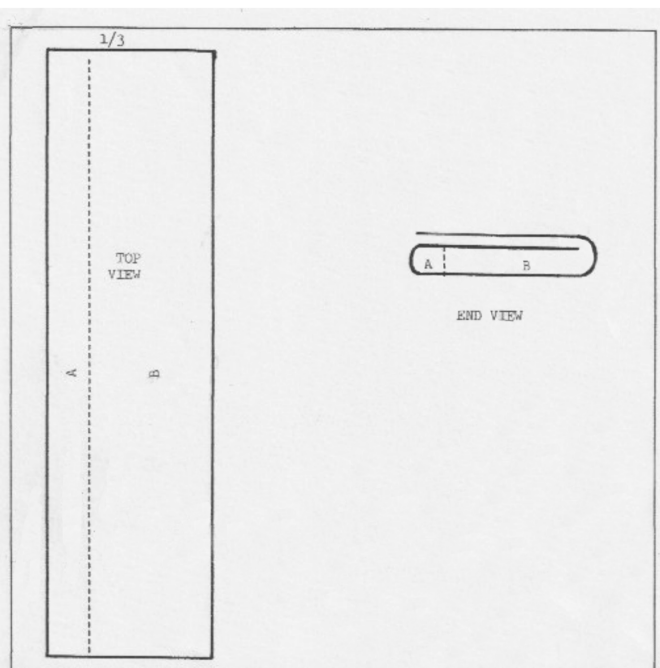
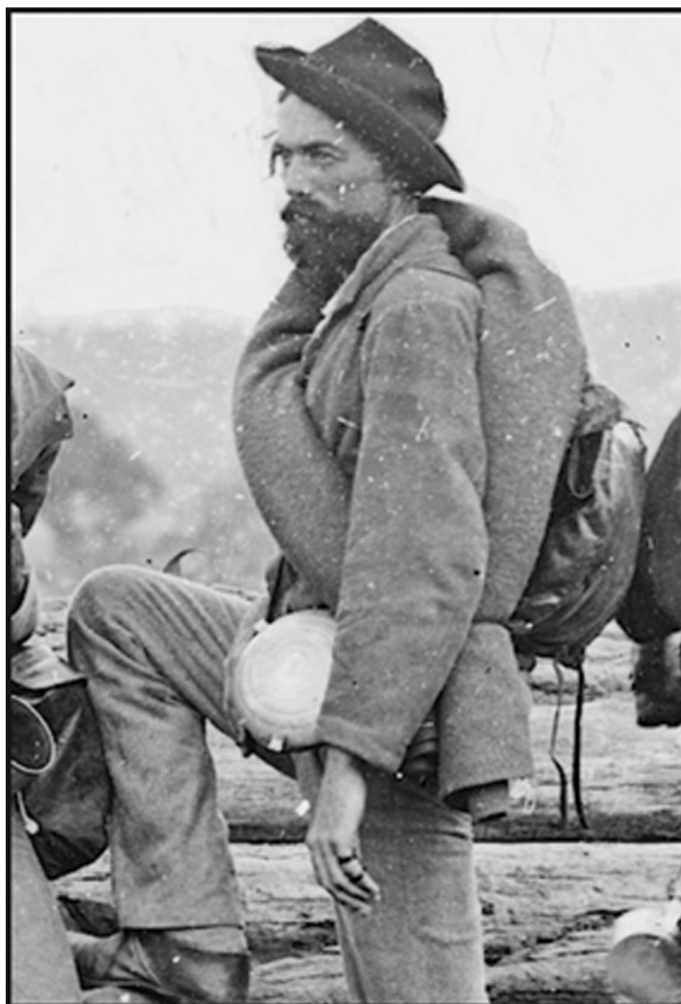
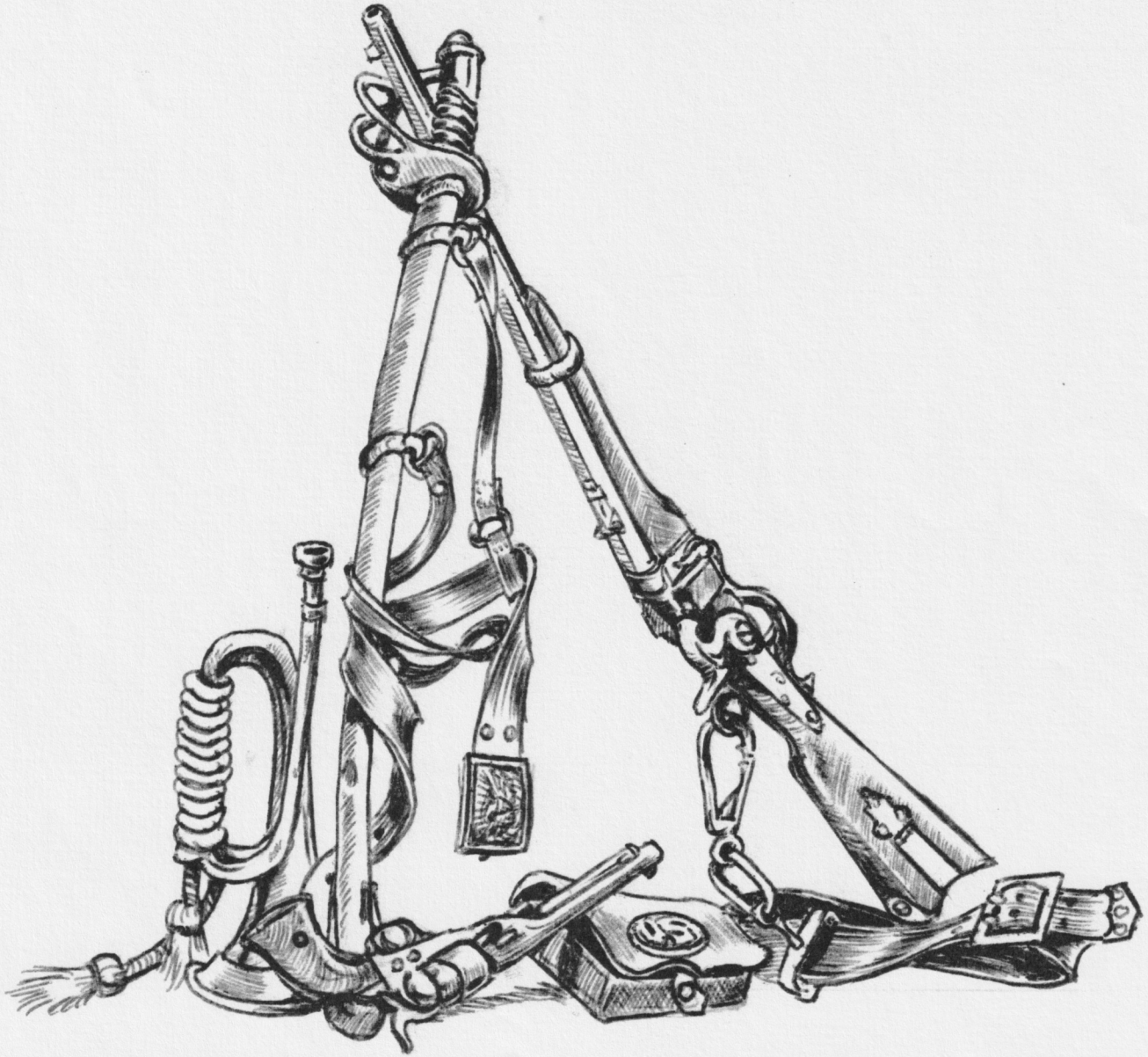


Figure 2. Folding the blanket.

- A Rigid articles are now along the left edge of the folded blanket.
- B Soft, pliable items are on the right and in the center.



Arms of the Cavalry  
model 1860 Light Cav. Saber  
model 1860 Colt Army Revolver, .44 cal  
model 1859 Sharps Carbine, 54. cal





Co. A

Greg Sweatt



Uniform issue in the Civil War  
was not an exact science.

# WAITING...





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