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Edited by Terry Del Bene.

Provided for your info ... your mileage may vary – Dom

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Sleeping in Campaign Style

By: William Newcom

Travel light, freeze at night

Mention sleeping in the 1860's campaign style and you will hear veteran reenactors say, "Travel light, freeze at night." I have listed a few hints that should help reduce the freezing part and increase your comfort zone. First, you need to pick the sleep site. It should be level or with a slight head uphill grade. Next, determine the location your hips will be and dig a shallow hole for them. It's important your entire body lay flat, it helps support the natural arch of your back. Cover the site with some kind of ground cloth to reduce the amount of body heat lost to the ground and keep you dry.

Covering yourself

The way you cover yourself with a blanket is also important. Tuck the bottom portions under your feet, this will prevent blanket shift and shut out heat stealing drafts. The last touch is to place a poncho or oil 'Cloth over you to keep out the morning dew. It's personal preference how much clothing you wear to bed, but it should be layered and not too loose. Always take off your shoes. Your feet, hands and head will lose heat at night, they must be covered. A sleeping cap or scarf, mittens and an extra pair of clean woolen socks are light weight and take up very little room in your bed roll. On cool damp nights, a shelter comes in handy. To prevent looking like a pack mule preparing for them, form a mess group. Just like the old vets, you will find that four bed rolls put together make a weather proof sleeping area for four men and their traps. It's also wise to have all those bodies in one place generating heat. The trick is not losing it.

RED RIVER PACKING LIST

By Kevin Hall

Your editor has been urging me over the last month to reproduce the packing list that I composed for the first Red River event in '94. Unfortunately my original list was on a computer that I know longer have but the rewrite should allow me the freedom to interject ideas and reasoning. To put it bluntly, give reasons as to why my suggestions should be ignored.

Items to be carried per person in addition to light marching order equipment

1 Wool Blanket no quilts and no huge heavy blankets

1 Gum Poncho or gum blanket

1 Tent Half (optional)- If you must carry one to feel secure make sure that a buddy has the other half. Showing up with a half that will not button to another if fairly useless. Many carry a half instead of a poncho and others, myself included, carry no tentage at all and choose just a poncho. If it rains you are going to get wet, its a fact of life. Some opt for 2 gum blankets and no tentage which is probably the same weight but a little more utilitarian. If you do carry a tent half or piece of canvas make sure that it is 8 ounce or less canvas. Heavier canvases were not used for tent halves then for a reason, they are to heavy to carry. One idea to consider is to have 2 halves per group of four.

Rope or good Twine- I usually carry 10 to 20 feet of good quality 1/4 inch rope at all times. (There are sources of hemp rope available for those who wish a lighter, stronger, water-resistant chord- Ed.) You can wrap the whole length around your bed roll or tie it at the base of your knapsack under the buckles. You can often find yourself getting a free invite to a she-bang by being the only person with the rope to actually build one. Make sure that you always reuse the rope and try not to cut it. Rope is one item that you will not come by on the march. Any outdoor survivalist will tell you it's probably the most time consuming and annoying item to make in the wild. Twine is also very beneficial for small repairs and a small ball of it can be fit into the haversack very easily.

Small pocket knife 3" or less the lighter the better. Keep it in a clothing pocket. Its doubtful that you will be doing any major butchering to warrant carrying anything more substantial. If I can butcher a deer with a pocket knife I'm sure that you could too. It just takes a little extra patience.

Weapon cleaning kit- Worm, oil and rotten stone or pumice. You can substitute wood ash as the abrasive and grease for the oil but I can't recommend it in the long run.

Personal Mess Kit- You don't need a knife you have your pocket knife remember! And you don't need more than 1 fork and spoon. There are numerous accounts of veterans with only a spoon as a mess kit. Think about it, if you need to stick something just use your pocket knife instead of a fork. Instead of a plate consider a small fry pan or a canteen half lashed to the outside of your smooth side or bulls eye canteen. To carry both a plate and frying pan is just extra weight. Some of us have even enjoyed

success with one frying pan per the whole mess which is passed around as the communal plate. And of course one good serviceable cup.

One Extra Shirt (optional)- There are many accounts of men wearing two shirts at once, including Jackson at his death. Personally I feel comfortable with washing my shirt and drying it while wearing my coat as sole covering. But an extra shirt is nice if it turns cold. It's your call.

Toilet Paper- The most effective way that I have found yet to carry this little necessity is as follows. Tear each paper square from the roll individually then compress the stack for awhile under a pile of books. To package make a paper envelope of the proper size to hold it and glue all but one flap down. When you are done it's no larger than the size of a paper square and a half inch thick with a side that flips up and pull out what you need. The better quality of toilet paper the fluffier it will be after you pull it out of the package. [this is a good hint to package it to take up little space - Dom].



1 All Purpose Rag for: gun cleaning, pot holder, towel, clothes patching, sweat rag, and emergency T.P. Please no modern bandanas (including the railroad bandanas – the white paisley on red or blue).

3 Pair of Wool Socks- Depending on how conditioned your feet are here is a suggested scenario. Wear two pair for the march. Upon arriving into camp, that you just made out of the wilderness 5 minutes ago, take the two pair of and put your reserve on. This will give you a chance to wash the ones that you wore and ensure that they are dry for the next days march. [I prefer wearing Mickey Black's period cotton socks and woolen socks over them when I campaign – Dom]

Extra Pair of Shoes (optional)- Although it's not one of my practices I know of people that swear by this one. Giving you feet another set of leather sand paper to wear

will probably cut down on the blisters if alternated but the weight factor is the major downfall of this one. If you do opt for this one make sure the extra pair are in your pack and not dangling from behind beating you to death.

Matches- Whether you smoke or not bring a good supply in some kind of waterproof container.

Sulphur Powder- Optional but highly recommended for bug protection.

Personal Medical Necessities- Don't shortcut if you need it bring it.

Empty Poke Sacks for Rations- Usually the rations will be issued in them but carrying a few extra is always a good idea if for nothing more than separating cooked from uncooked.

Two Small Candles- They are more for quick fire-starting in wet conditions than light. But a little light every now and then never hurts in the forest. Definitely a necessity for Officers and NCOs.

One days worth of Rations- Make sure that its something durable because it will be just for emergencies and you may carry it throughout the week. If you have a sweet tooth this may be your option to stock up. After a few days most people are willing to trade food for hard candy or chocolate.

Moleskin- Squares of moleskin fit great in the bible pouch portion of your cartridge box. Don't expect the doctor to have a knapsack full for everybody.

List per four people or group mess- Spices Salt, pepper, sugar, etc. One small container of Crisco (vegetable shortening) or similar grease. You won't necessarily get issued pork every time so cooking grease may become important. Keep in mind that when you do get issued something that produces grease save it instead of throwing it away as per normal habit.

One Small Hatchet with a good cover for the blade [pack inside pack, or borrow from the Battalion tools].

Gun tools- Screw driver, cone wrench, mainspring vice, etc. Remember only a Sgt. is allowed to do any gunsmithing in the field.

One Mucket- Believe me one is all that is needed per four people. It will usually get used to soak rice and beans while your cups have coffee in them.

One bar of Soap- After a few days you will see the importance of this one.

Water purification tablets- I have never had to use any yet at an event, but they take up little room and the alternative is very bad.

One Small Tin of Various Tablets- Aspirin, antibiotics, etc.. A small pistol cap tin works well.

Housewife- One is sufficient for four people.

One small bottle or container of kerosene or coal oil Works better than a knife for chigger extraction and as emergency fire starter. By no means a necessity but I know how some people are about bugs.

One poke bag of Corn Starch or gold bond Believe me you will need it for chafing and bring plenty. The more you wear your pants before the event the tougher your skin will be and the less you will have to worry about this. Yes forget what the neighbors think, wear your jean or kersey around the yard for a while.

One small sharpening stone

If you want to keep a journal or diary of the event see if your pards want to do the same then share the same book. After a week together you will be close enough to feel comfortable with your pard to have someone else carry it for a day or two.

Forget the reading material! You will not have the time to read it to warrant carrying the weight. And you would really feel bad tearing up a period book for toilet paper or fire starter.

There is one thing to always consider that is just as important now as it was then. What happens if one person in your mess group has to fall out because of fatigue, blisters or something else. What you carry on your back is always the most important. What you carry as a mess is always the secondary creatures of comfort that if need be you can live without. And what you don't carry is usually the reason that you make it to the end of the march.

From Vol. XV, No. 1

MORE ON FOOT CARE

by: Bill Newcom

Proper foot care is essential in order to maintain the soldier's optimal health and physical fitness. Wash feet with cold water and soap. Dry feet thoroughly, especially between the toes. Soldiers who perspire freely should apply foot powder lightly and evenly twice a day.

Foot marches are a severe test for the feet. Use only properly fitted footgear and socks. Footgear should be completely broken in. DO NOT break in new footgear on a long march. Any blisters, sores and so forth, should be treated promptly. Keep the feet as dry as possible on the march. Carry extra socks and change if the feet get wet. Inspect feet during rest breaks.

Blisters

Blisters are a common problem caused by friction. They may appear anywhere friction may occur, such as the toes, heels, or sole of the foot. Unless treated promptly and correctly, they may become infected, the best treatment for blisters is PREVENTION.

If unbroken and located where there is no pressure, protect the blister by padding around in and allow fluid to absorb.

If unbroken but located where it will break from pressure, blister should be drained. Wash blister and area around it. Sterilize a needle and make a hole at the edge of the blister. Use a clean cloth and gently apply pressure removing the fluid. Cover area with a clean cloth and secure.

Treat a broken blister as an open wound, wash and cover the area. If the skin is torn and raw skin is exposed, pad around the area to protect it from pressure. Always watch for signs of possible infection, such as redness, throbbing and so forth. DO NOT perform self-care for blisters that lie deep in the middle of the sole of your foot.