

FEDERAL HAYERSACK

Pattern and Instructions compiled by 1st Sgt. Koepp, Co. D 2nd US Sharpshooters

Supplies:

- 6 oz cotton drill or linen for the sack
- Thicker cotton twill for pocket
- No. 35 linen thread
- 3 5/8" tin buttons
- Black paint, paint brush, etc.
- Beeswax for thread
- Scissors
- Assorted lay out tools like rulers, compasses, etc.
- Needle
- Thimble
- Pins
- 5/8" buckle
- 4-5 oz leather
- 2 copper rivets and tools. If you are creating a pattern that stitches the closing strap, you can ignore the rivets.

From the 1865 Quartermaster Manual pg. 223:

"Haversacks—to be made $\frac{3}{4}$ yards of $\frac{7}{8}$ cotton or pure linen drilling, to weigh 6 ounces to the yard; $\frac{1}{2}$ yard of $\frac{3}{4}$ cotton or pure linen drilling, of same material as sack, for the pocket; 3 white metal suspender buttons, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ skeins of W.B. linen thread, No. 35; one $\frac{5}{8}$ inch roller buckle, having a leather strap and loop strongly sewed on the sack, with two rows of stitches, of not less than 6 each, all of the thread used for sewing to be well waxed and strong; a leather strap 7 inches long and $\frac{5}{8}$ inches wide, punched with 6 holes, at equal distances, to receive the tongue of buckle, and to be sewed on in the same manner, with the same kind of thread, and the same number of stitches; the sling or carrying strap, to be of the same material as sack, and doubled; to be from 40-45 inches long and 2 inches wide, strongly sewed on sack, with 2 rows of stitches near the outer edges; the pocket to button on the inside of sack; the outside of the sack, with the strap to be painted with the same material as for a knapsack. Bottom of sack, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide; back, from top of flap to bottom of sack, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches; dept of pocket, 11 inches; and width of pocket 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches."

INTRODUCTION:

I have a favorite haversack and wanted to make a copy of it. This particular haversack has a single piece body which posed some unique challenges in figuring out the order of operations. These instructions are based on this particular style of haversack. Using the process and the above regulations should allow you to draft or modify this pattern for another variant you may be interested in creating. I will say, there may be easier ways to achieve the required accuracy and finished results. By all means, if you know of better ways for you, please don't feel limited to my process.

For all stitching except securing the strap, I used a single thread while sewing. The haversack I copied used exclusively running stitches and felling whip stitches for construction. For those who may be newer to sewing, something like "No. 35 thread" refers to the size of the thread. I purchase my thread and needles from Burnley and Trowbridge.

Variations exist in these bags and one such area is the strap buckle. Use one appropriate for your impression. Even if you don't need another haversack, having replacement pockets can be useful for when your old ones get too greasy and grimy from your rations.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Create and cut out pattern pieces.
2. Mark and press stitch lines. I use pencil on utility fabrics like these because it wears off quickly and nearly all markings will be covered in paint when completed. It is worth the time to lay out all of the stitch lines before and as you go.
3. Press hem on sack front.
4. Press hems on center reinforcement
5. Place and pin center reinforcement to center inside of sack front with unfinished edge placed under sack top hem. Fell center reinforcement hem on all 3 sides.
6. Press ¼" hem on bottom of sack flap facing.
7. Pin sack facing to sack flap with right sides together.
8. Stitch ¼" seam allowance across top edge with a running stitch. An even running stitch would be fine as well.
9. Turn inside out and press.
10. Top stitch with running stitch ½ from flap edge. The top stitching just follows the inside of the hem.
11. Fell the hemmed bottom of the inner flap.

SACK FRONT HEM:

This portion is a bit strange, but with the right amount of patience it'll come out great. Since this haversack body is one piece the ½ front hem needs to ease into the flap. The easing is just awkward, so take your time.

12. Press the ½" double hem of sack front. This thins down as you reach the folded side.
13. Fell the seam towards the folded side. As you approach the fold, you'll transition into something of a rolled hem that ends at the flap facing.
14. Press the hem. A tailor's ham can be handy for the hem on the fold, but it's not necessary.

BACK TO THE SACK...

15. Pin right sides of sack together.
16. Stitch side seam with running stitch. Stop stitching at the ½" seam allowance for the bottom.

THE BOTTOM:

This part can be tricky, so approach it when you are ready to have to some patience. In addition to your ½" seam allowance mark, find center length wise and measure that too. This is also a good time to press the folded edge of the sack front. The side of the sack opposite the seam. Mark this line with a pencil or a method of your choice. This portion of the build took me several attempts to reverse engineer the order of operations. If your experience informs you of a more efficient way to reach the same result, feel free to try that.

17. Align center mark of bottom to side seam and pin. Align center mark to opposite side and pin.
18. Begin stitching carefully. These stitches can be quite awkward at times but accuracy is critical. You can use either a back or running stitch.
19. When you reach a corner, stop. You will need to cut a slit on your layout line on the sack and not the bottom. You will be cutting the line in the direction you are stitching. This is a bit hard to explain but this step allows you to ease the corner. The easing can be a handful, just be patient.

BACK TO THE SACK...

20. Now is a good time to sew in your strap reinforcements. On the reinforcement that goes on the folded side of the sack, press a $\frac{1}{4}$ hem on all sides. Locate, pin, and fell. On the seamed side, cut off the seam allowance on the side of the reinforcement that aligns with the side. Press all other sides like the other. Removing the seam allowance along the seamed side reduces bulk. Align this, tuck it up to the side seam tightly and pin.
21. Now it's time to fell the inside seams. You'll want your felling stitches to appear on the back of the sack for the side seam. Trim one side of the hem to about an $\frac{1}{8}$ " then press the longer side over as you would to fell your stitch and fell away. The felling stitches for the bottom should appear around the front of the sack.
22. Turn sack inside out.

THE STRAP:

23. Regulations state that the strap should be between 40-45" long. It's important to factor in the extra 2" on each side to stitch to the sack. I cut my fabric to 51". You can adjust as you need. I cut my fabric 51" long by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. On one long side, press over $\frac{1}{4}$ hem. On the opposite side press over 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Press over the hemmed side so that it covers the unhemmed side. This strap should now be 2" wide. Press this all carefully and pin well. I top stitched this seam along the edge with my treadle sewing machine.
24. Press strap again and press under $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ " hem on each end.
25. Mark a line 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " up from pressed hem. Pin strap with seam down to back of sack aligning one edge to the side of the sack/reinforcement and the top line to the top of the reinforcement. Pin well.
26. Use a felling stitch to secure the pressed side to the sack. You don't want your stitches showing on the inside of the sack, so guide your needle through the layers of the fabric.
27. Draw a line $\frac{1}{4}$ " up from the bottom of the strap and stitch across with a running stitch. You will want to use doubled thread for this.
28. Stitch a similar line across the top line. The line 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " up from the bottom of the strap.
29. Stitch another line in between the two.
30. Repeat for the opposite side.
31. Note: Do not stitch an X shape to secure the strap. It was not done on any haversack.

FINISHING:

32. Locate your $\frac{5}{8}$ " tin buttons 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the sides and $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the top of the reinforcements. Stitch well into place. Stitch front button in the center of the center reinforcement $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the top.
33. Now it's time to paint. Check out our videos about painting cloth if you'd like. I use 3-4 coats of Rustoleum gloss. If you have a preferred finish, you can use that instead. On the inside flap paint up to the tops of the strap reinforcements.

BUCKLE & STRAP:

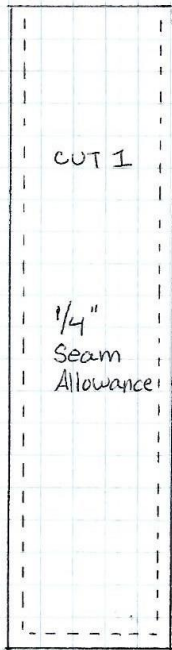
34. Cut a strip of thin leather (4-5 oz) $\frac{5}{8}$ " wide and 7" long. Taper the buckle end about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to a narrower round point. Round the rivet side of the strap. On the rounded end, I punch a rivet hole $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the end and from there marked for 6 holes $\frac{7}{8}$ " on center.
35. Cut 2 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter round leather reinforcements. This just happened to be the exact size of a rivet anvil I had in my leather kit.
36. Cut a $\frac{5}{8}$ " wide strap long enough to accommodate your buckle, a leather strap keeper, and a rivet. This may vary depending on your hardware. Cut notch out of strap to fit your buckle.

37. For the strap keeper, I just eyeballed the width. It's probably 3/8" wide and long enough to wrap around the buckle strap and just the right amount of slack to easily take the strap. Again, this may vary depending on the type of leather you use.
38. Dye the visible (front) parts of your leather using either a modern black leather dye or with vinegar. We did a video on making vinegar. Allow to dry then oil.
39. For the strap, find center on your flap and punch a rivet sized hole 1 1/4" from the edge. Install round leather reinforcement on the underside and finish with strap on outside. Set rivet.
40. Locate your buckle setup centered on your center sack reinforcement and 2 1/4" from bottom of center reinforcement. Set rivet like for the flap.

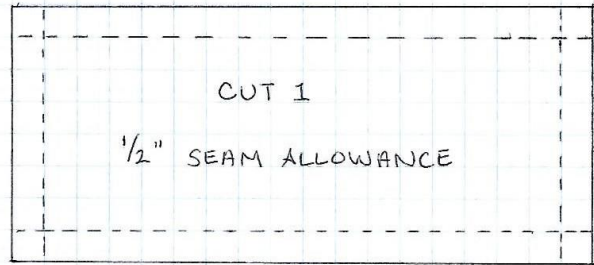
THE POCKET:

41. Cut pocket piece 28 x 13" out of your heavier material.
42. On wrong side of both ends, press under a 1/4" hem then press over a 1" hem. Whip stitch this hem down on both ends.
43. Pin wrong sides together and stitch the sides with a running stitch.
44. Trim one side of your seam allowance to about 1/8" and fell your seams with a whip stitch.
45. With bag still inside out, it's time to box your corners. This can be a bit difficult to explain in writing, but there are videos on YouTube if you need a video explanation. To box your corners, pin your side seams together a couple of times near the top of the bag. You want the pins to perfectly align the seams. Then adjust the bottom of the bag until it forms the shape of a diamond (a square). On the new corners, mark 2" down from the tip then draw a perfectly perpendicular line to that across forming a triangle. Using the lines on a cut out mat really helps. This perpendicular line is now your stitch line. Stitch with a running stitch.
46. With corners boxed, now you need to stitch those corners to the sides of the bag. Align the point of your boxed corner perfectly to each side seam, pin, and whip stitch into place.
47. Locate your button holes and hand sew.
48. Congratulations, you now have a haversack!

CENTER REINFORCEMENT
2 1/2 x 8 1/2"

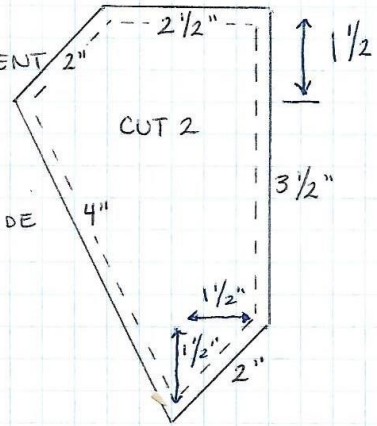


BOTTOM OF HAVERSACK
4 1/2 x 10"

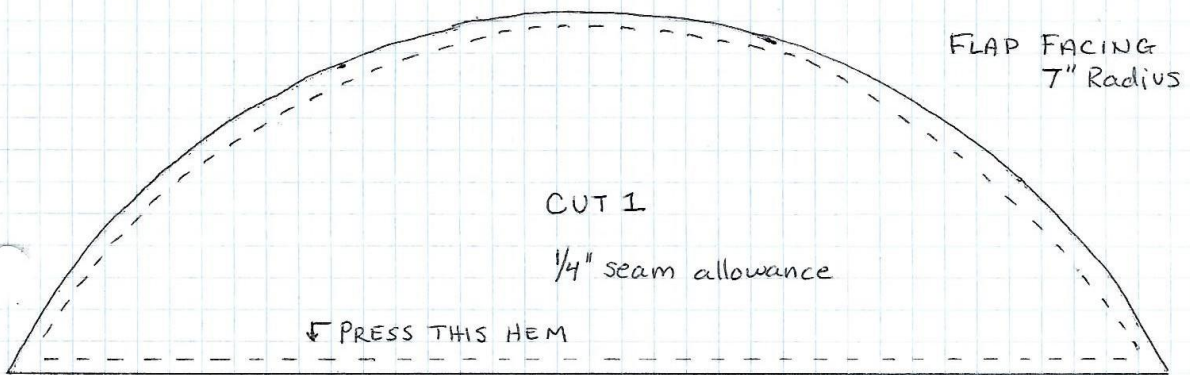
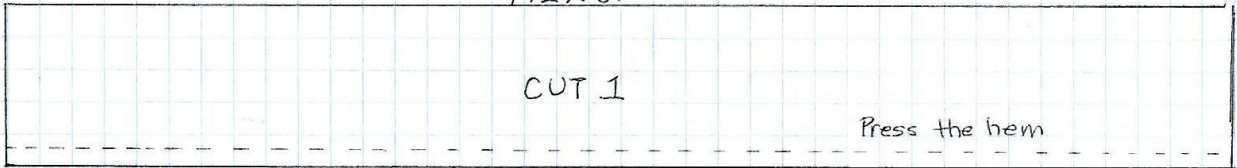


STRAP REINFORCEMENT

CUT 2
FLIP PATTERN
FOR OPPOSITE SIDE



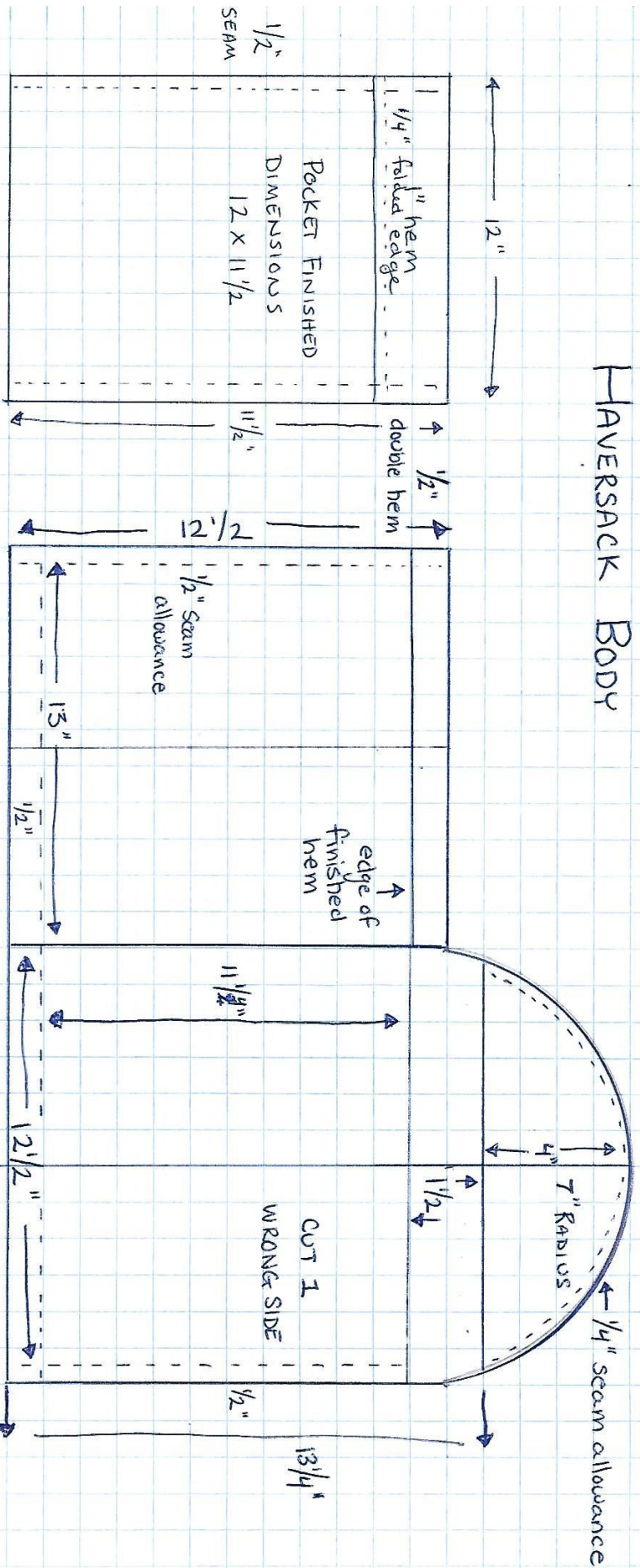
STRAP
4 1/2 x 51"



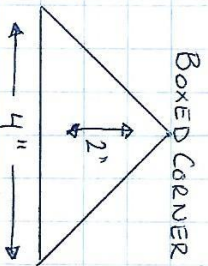
* Images not to scale

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HAVERSACK BODY



POCKET: CUT 1 pc. 28x13"



REGULATIONS:

WIDTH OF SACK	12 1/2"
Depth of sack	11 1/4"
Top To Bottom	16 1/2"
Bottom	3 1/2 x ? manual doesn't say.