# Twitter Thread by Civil War Humor

**Civil War Humor**
@CivilWarHumor

**“Hey, CivilWarHumor, have we been here before -- an inauguration beset with assassination plots and insurrection, with doubts raised about the loyalty of law enforcement, troops, and even congresspeople?”**

**Of course! But back then, Winfield Scott was on the case.**

**/THREAD**

Yesterday I posted Scott’s heartwarming quote about “manuring the hills of Arlington” with the bodies of anyone who disrupted the counting of electoral votes. Scott, the 74-year-old VIRGINIAN-born Army chief, was one of the few in the build-up to the Civil War who GOT IT.

Scott is oft-derided as old or gout-ridden or gluttonous (hey, he was America’s first true gourmand). But in the waning days of Buchanan’s administration, when dark plots swirled in the halls of the Capitol, Scott stood virtually alone -- and made DAMN SURE Lincoln got sworn in.

The most famous story from this tense time is Scott offering the defense of Washington DC to Robert E. Lee, regarded by his peers as the best in the biz, who turned it down and asked if he could stay on the sidelines. “I have no place in my Army for equivocal men,” Scott replied.

In late December 1860, as federal troops moved into Fort Sumter and passions flared, Buchanan finally forced out his traitorous Sec of War, John B. Floyd. Here’s a thread I did about Floyd recently, cuz WhO CoULd HaVe SeEn ThIs CoMiNg: https://t.co/eZLhCjnOgb

> Since traitors are in the news, let\u2019s look at one of our biggies -- no, not Benedict Arnold. (Cmon, he was an amateur by comparison and practically British.) No, this guy EMBODIES what it means to Make America Great Again: grift, treason, cowardice.
>
> Step forward, John B. Floyd. pic.twitter.com/US2Nh0Q4wm
>
> — Civil War Humor (@CivilWarHumor) December 18, 2020

At that time, there were only a couple hundred Marines in D.C. -- which, remember, was between two slave states and loaded with secessionists. Prominent unionists like Seward and Stanton were getting nervous about a coup, and they couldn't trust the local militia.

ENTER WINFIELD SCOTT. Quite literally! The first thing Scott did was move back to D.C., cuz -- you're going to love this -- when Jefferson Davis took over as Sec of War, Scott shifted Army HQ to New York to be BE FURTHER AWAY FROM JEFFERSON DAVIS.

How's that for "perceptive?"

Next, Scott called in companies of troops from widely disparate locations, thus assuring they wouldn't be in on any coup. I'd argue this move gets underrated as a step towards war, cuz the secessionists in Congress got pissed -- having been THIS close to pulling off some shit.

Then Winfield Scott turned to Charles P. Stone -- an ex-Army officer who'd been hanging around D.C. Stone told Scott he thought most of the D.C. populace was loyal, but he worried about the militia. (Stop me if this sounds familiar.) Scott made Stone his Inspector General …

Stone ran across one militia captain who described his job as "keeping the Yankees from coming down to coerce the South." (Presumably, he posted this on Parler.) Stone rooted out disloyal militia companies and formed 16 new ones, despite Buchanan's wishy-washiness.

Without those new, loyal troops, Stone said, "Mr. Lincoln would never have been inaugurated." Stone's detectives also foiled a plot amongst the militia to seize public buildings and official government seals -- please, I'M BEGGING YOU, STOP ME IF THIS SOUNDS FAMILIAR.

(Stone would later be scapegoated by McClellan for the disastrous Battle of Ball's Bluff and imprisoned for 6 months, suspected of treason. "If he is a traitor, I am a traitor and we are all traitors," said Scott, who was NOT A TRAITOR.

McClellan, on the other hand …)

The story of Lincoln's secret, late-night arrival in Washington D.C. for the inauguration is a tale in itself -- escorted Heroically by The Heroic Allan Pinkerton(™) , Abe switched trains and changed his schedule to stay one step ahead of assassins and kidnappers. #BaltimorePlot

The next thing to do was to certify the vote. Unlike our Top Security Minds, Scott took no chances. An angry mob gathered, but was dissuaded by FUCKING CANNONS around the Capitol. VP Breckinridge counted the votes; he'd later be a Rebel general. So don't pat Pence on the back.

For the inauguration, Scott put snipers on roofs and cavalry at intersections. One of Stone's agents reported a plot to blow up the platform when Lincoln took the oath; Scott put a battalion of loyal militia around the stage. Every move the Secesh made, Scott was a step ahead.

Lincoln’s carriage was escorted by Army engineers (look, if shit goes down you want the guys who can do QUICK MATH up front), and plainclothes cops were everywhere in the crowd, the way the FBI does now if it’s, like, a march for healthcare or a campus protest about veganism.

My favorite detail, though, is that Scott was too out of shape to ride a horse -- his physical hardships were part of why Lil Mac got the big gig when war broke out -- so he sat in his carriage and watched.

“You wanna assassinate ME, Secesh?” (puts caviar down) “Come get some."