



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 187

May 2011

On This Date-150 Years Ago

May of 1861 saw wild activity at Fort Snelling with the First Minnesota Regiment now complete. The regiment was full, with extra men besides. Training began in earnest on April 30, so the first week of May was the first taste of being a soldier for the men.

Taste was something they had a few complaints about! The following is from an article that appeared on May 2, 1861, in the *St. Paul Daily Press*.

The complaints against the rations rose almost to a rebellion on Tuesday eve. One company declared the “grub so execrable that they would not touch it,” and pitched it, and the tinware it was served on out of doors, preferring to go to bed supperless to eating it. A firm yet earnest protest was sent to Head Quarters in relation to it, and Col. Gorman on being assured of these facts, issued the following preemptory order to the contractors:

*Regimental Headquarters, First Regt. Minnesota Volunteers
Fort Snelling, May 1, 1861*

Messers Eustis & Lamb

The men under my command have made and still do make frequent and grievous complaints that the food furnished by you is of an inferior quality, and not properly served to them. This in no manner can be tolerated by me, and if further complaints of a like nature are made to me, your contract will be revoked, or a Court of Enquiry called to take action.

*By order of the colonel commanding
Wm. B. Leach, Adjt.*

The paper noted that by the next day, the rations had improved substantially and the boys “felt more lively and cheerful” than on the previous evening.

Demanding “good grub” is something that never changes!!

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at the event at the Oakdale Elementary School during our lunch break, May 26.



Upcoming Events

This is our bread and butter month. We need all members to step up and help earn our operating funds for the year. Please contact Daryl with a list of those events you can attend ASAP!! We need to know what stations to plan at which places and who will be staffing them. **Plan accordingly to arrive on time** as we need everyone to set up and be ready.

May 13 Eagle Point Elementary, Oakdale MN
7850 15th Street North, Oakdale Arrive by 8:30 to be ready for the students at 9:15. We will set up 5 stations and rotate students through.

May 16 Calvin Christian School, Edina MN
4015 Inglewood Ave. S, Edina Arrive at 9:00 to set up, students arrive at 9:50. We will set up 5 stations and rotate students through.

May 18 State Capitol, St. Paul _10-2
More details are promised soon, but right now, we are going to have a display table in the rotunda with 6-8 people in period dress. We'll need to arrive by 9:30 to be set up. Watch your email for further details as we get them.

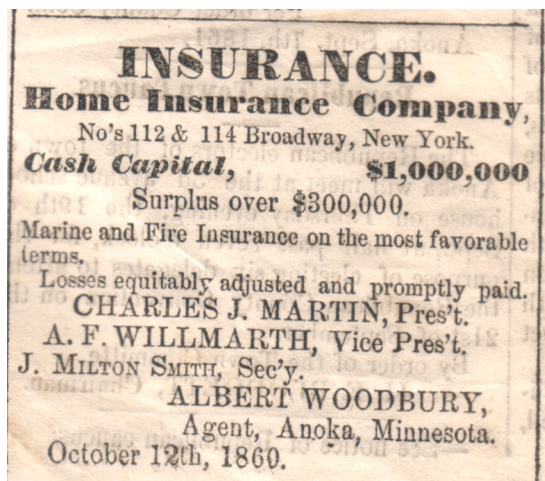
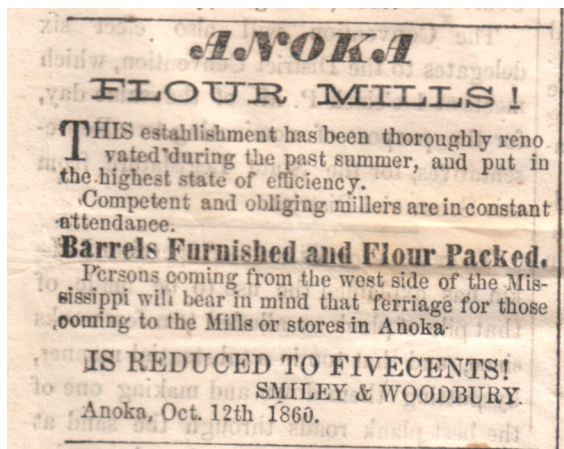
May 21 Rum River Library, Anoka, MN _4201
6th Ave., Anoka. This is a four hour event, 10-2, for the Library's Live at the Library event. We'll set up the gun, do firing demos, and other stations much like schools. We saw hundreds of people at 'Live at the Library' last year, so we want to put on a good show again.

May 26 Oakdale Elementary, Oakdale MN
821 Glenbrook Arrive at 8:30 to set up for students at 9:15. We will set up 5 stations and rotate students through.

May 31 Memorial Day, Red Wing, MN
Arrive at Bay Point Park by 7:30 to set up. There will be a reading by one of our Battery ladies for the Memorial Day service and honor volleys from our gun.

Bring your bag lunch for the school events (period correctness NOT required) as there will be NO time to go get anything.

In the News...



These ads appeared on the front page of the *Anoka Republican* newspaper, September 14, 1861. The Smiley and Woodbury Mill was a joint owned business in the town of Anoka and one of the owners was Albert Woodbury. He was also selling insurance, as in the second ad. Additionally, Woodbury is listed as a “dealer in real estate” in the 1860 census. He was one of the leading businessmen in Anoka before he enlisted to serve with the Second Minnesota Battery.

History of Crocheting

Submitted by Stacy Overby

For many, crocheting is one of those arts that just must have been around forever. Everyone knows someone who crochets, but most people don't know much about the history of it. How old is the art? Where did it come from?

“Crochet” is French for the word “hook”. This name derived from the hook like tool used to crochet. However, some very early examples of what appears to be crocheted lace and trim appear to have been done with fingers and not tools. Finger crochet, a hooking of thread with the fingers, might be even earlier.

Crochet as we know it today can be positively dated back to Europe in about the 18th century. It didn't become popular until the late 18th to early 19th century. Interestingly enough, the Irish potato famine had quite a bit to do with this rise in popularity. Due to the famine and subsequent lack of money, many Irish women took to selling crocheted items as a way of making some extra money.

There is some evidence, and quite a bit of speculation, that crocheting actually dates much further back in history. Some of the early artifacts from places such as Turkey, China, and South America include lace that appears to have been crocheted. In fact, some theories suggest that trade with one or more of these places brought the art to Europe. Unfortunately, there has not been any definitive evidence found to prove the origins of crochet as an art form.

Historically, research has found a link between a woman's crochet hook and the occasion for which it was given. Originally crochet hooks were made of wood, bone, ivory or brass. Some even had mother of pearl inlays. Historians believe the more ornately carved and decorated the crochet hook, the more likely it was to have been a wedding gift.

So, the next time you see someone crocheting or you cover up with that afghan Grandma made you, you'll know a little more about the history of the art.

In observance of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, the Goodhue County History Center presents
Of The People: Faces of the Civil War
Opening May, 3, 2011

This exhibit looks at the men who answered the call to arms from Goodhue County. It will be open throughout 2011.

The Play's the Thing!

The History Theatre in St. Paul will be presenting **A Civil War Christmas, An American Musical Celebration** written by Paula Vogel. The play runs from November 19 through December 18, 2011.

There are group rates if there are a number of us who would like to attend. We could make it a winter outing, a Christmas party, go in period dress, or just as regular folks. Think it over and we'll discuss the possibility at upcoming meetings.

Battery Profile

After attending a very moving memorial service at the Keokuk National Cemetery, members paid their respects to Samuel Markham, an original Battery member known to be buried in a marked grave at Keokuk. Another Battery member is thought perhaps to be buried in Keokuk, the hospital where he died, but there are no records of his burial. Mrs. Wendel was working from memory about them both and got Thew's story confused with another man. Her apologies for the errors. This is what we know about the men buried in Keokuk.

Samuel Markham

Samuel joined the Second Battery very early in its formation when he enlisted on January 14, 1862. He probably knew the men who would command the Battery since he came from Anoka County, Samuel came from a farm in the township of Ramsey.

The descriptive roll put Samuel at 31 years old and born in New York. He was 5' 7-1/2" tall, had gray eyes, black hair and a dark complexion. He was not married.

Samuel trained and went South with the Battery, but by June 29, he was admitted to Pope's Division Hospital in Farmington, Mississippi. At the time, his "complaint and dysfunction" was not noted. A few days later, Samuel was sent north on the transport ship, *City of Memphis*, to be cared for at the general hospital at Keokuk, Iowa. He was admitted there on July 10, but it seemed nothing could be done for him. Samuel died on August 30, 1862. The official cause of death was listed as "inflammation of the bowels" in one source. Another said it was chronic diarrhea.

Samuel was buried in the Soldier's Cemetery at Keokuk, Iowa.

Betheul Thew

Betheul left very few records of his short life. He was born in Peru, New York, about 1830. By 1860, he was living in Minneapolis as he and Mary Blake were married there on the 11th of May. Betheul was working as a wheelwright. They had a daughter, Lilly Bell, on May 23, 1861.

The first shots of the Civil War had been fired by then and it would soon demand more men from Minnesota. Betheul answered the patriotic call and was mustered into the Second Battery on the day it was formally accepted in the service of the United States, March 21, 1862.

Betheul went South with the Battery in May, but his health began to trouble him. In July, he was sent to the hospital at Farmington, Mississippi. Not long after, he was moved by riverboat to the hospital at Keokuk, Iowa, still suffering from what was called "ulceration of the bowels." The disease would take Betheul's life on July 30, 1862.

Although the cemetery at Keokuk was one of the original 12 established as National Cemeteries, Betheul is not listed as buried there. Neither is he listed as buried in any of the nearby local cemeteries and nothing indicates his body was brought back to Minnesota. Where his final resting place may be will probably never be known. It is suspected that he was first buried in a local cemetery and later moved to the national cemetery. As was too often the case, the identities of these bodies failed to keep up with them and they are consequently buried as "unknown."

Two letters, one written by Captain Hotchkiss and one by Lieutenant Albert Woodbury, confirmed Betheul's death and testified to it being caused by his military service. This allowed Mary, Betheul's wife, to apply for a widow's pension, but it was not until after a special examination of the signature on the letter from Hotchkiss certified it as genuine did she receive the pension. That certification took until July 1, 1863, and it was not until October 12th that Mary began collecting her \$8 a month. To the Pension Department's credit, she was given back pay to date from the time of Betheul's death in July of 1862.

In 1869, when Mary was married again, she had to apply for a minor's pension for Lilly Bell. Again the Pension Department required verification and certification of the truth of the statements made about Lilly Bell's date of birth. No documentation shows if they completed the paperwork for Lilly Bell to benefit from her father's pension.



Recap

April 9, Flag Return to the Capitol, St. Paul

The Second Battery provided two color guards for the ceremony of returning restored battle flags of Minnesota regiments to the State Capitol. Privates Brian Tomashek and Bart Hoekstra volunteered for the honor of guarding the flag of the First Minnesota Battery. Secretary of State Mark Ritchie cut the ribbon on the case with the First Battery's flag.



April 30—May 1 Reenactment at Keokuk, Iowa

Nine battery members made the long journey to Keokuk and were rewarded with almost reasonable weather for once! There was a short shower of rain early Saturday morning, but it was over by breakfast and it was dry the rest of the day. Sunday clouded up and was cold and windy, but we all packed down dry!

We attended a very special memorial worship service at the National Cemetery on Sunday. A special part of service was getting dirt--certified by their geologist--to be from each of the 17 states represented by the soldiers buried there and asking people to sprinkle that dirt on the graves of soldiers from that state. They said then that these men would be resting beneath their own native soil...a very moving part of the ceremony.

Overall, it was a very nice first event of 2011. For more pictures, go to the Battery Facebook page at: (copy and paste this long address into your browser)

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/fbx/?set=a.10150225420046240.359254.371220336239&l=d5f9cc9d6c>



A great looking gun crew with a nice shot! Look at that lanyard still stretched and the Sergeant's hand not quiet to the ground. What a crew!



Brenda was sewing on Scottish John's jacket while Vickie stitched up his britches. Guess it does take a whole village to raise a child!

The Second Minnesota Light Artillery Battery is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Civil War history by living it.

Membership is \$12 per year. Non-member newsletter subscription rate is \$6.00 per year.

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Check that smoke—vent smoke but no muzzle smoke. And it was not a misfire!



It was COLD on Sunday—so cold we had to chop up the furniture to burn so we could keep warm! (Not really, the chair broke and he didn't want to haul it home.)