



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 195

February 2012

### On This Date-150 Years Ago

#### **February, 1862**

Recruiting was still the main focus of the Second Battery -to-be. As more men were mustered in, the unit was entitled to officers and during the month of February, some 50 men were mustered, entitling it to a full compliment of officers. William Hotchkiss got his heart's desire on Valentine's Day when he was commissioned captain of the Battery. It was a goal he had been working toward since he enlisted nearly five months earlier. It was the Second Battery he was in command of rather than the First, but he was officially a captain in the Artillery.

It is likely Hotchkiss was no longer out recruiting, but rather staying at Fort Snelling to drill and train his fledgling artillerists. By army regulations, the Battery was considered “full” at 145 men, but it was effective at considerably less. Recruiting would continue to bring it to full strength and to replace men who were discharged for various reasons or transferred to other units. Morning reports were kept starting in January, but there is no detail of the daily activities other than who was mustered in. Interestingly, the dates of when a man mustered in according to his personal enlistment sheets do not often match the date the morning report says he was mustered in. What the reason for the discrepancy may be is unknown, but based on other “date” omissions and errors in the morning reports, personal papers of the individual soldiers are probably the more correct date.

On Friday, February 28, the following article appeared on the front page of the **St. Paul Pioneer & Democrat**:

**Fully organized.**--- *We are informed by the Adjutant General that the following named gentlemen have been commissioned to take command in the Second Battery Light Artillery: Captain-- W. A. Hotchkiss, Anoka 1st Lieutenants-- G. Rosenk, St. Paul; Albert Woodbury, Anoka. 2d Lieutenants-- Jackson Taylor, Wright County; Richard L. Dawey, Winona.*

*The company now numbers one hundred and twenty-five men, and are said to be of the best material in the State. The company is kept in constant drill, and are improving very rapidly. The captain says he is opposed to burning any more powder without affecting something, and is very anxious to get to the scene of the action.*

There is an error in the above article, Hotchkiss was not from Anoka. His home was Monticello, in Wright County.

### Upcoming Events

#### **February 11, Centennial Library**

200 Civic Heights Circle, Circle Pines, 763-717-3294

#### **Civil War Winter Camp, 10:30 to 1:30**

Arrive by 9:30 for setting up. We will be setting up in the City Hall, directly across the sidewalk from the library and this building will be open for us by 9:30.

The Wendel indoor tent will be available for the “camp” part of the room as well as some other usual camp items. Please bring whatever kind of props you can for what you want to do and to make this more “camp-like.”

Ideas for soldiers include writing/reading letters, whittling, drill, repairing or caring for uniforms and equipment, etc.

Home front activities will be a Sanitary Commission, impression with the ladies getting ready for a Fair.

Other ideas are encouraged! Please let Vickie know what you plan to do so she can coordinate the activities—we don't all want to be doing the same thing!

#### **February 11, Preliminary 2012 Planning**

Please bring information on any event you have heard of you think might be something the Battery would be interested in participating in during the 2012 season. We will compile a list with dates for planning our calendar at the March meeting.

If you will not be at the meeting, send any info you have gathered to John Cain before February 9 so it can be brought up at the meeting.

#### **March 17, Elections & Calendar Planning**

Think about accepting a leadership position in the Battery as we will be electing officers for both the military and organizational leadership. We will also be discussing and choosing events for the 2012 calendar. 11:00 am at Marie's in Red Wing.

#### Next Meeting

#### **February 11, After the library event**

Circle Pines City Hall

Bring or send information on any possible event for 2012. We'll create the list to consider for our calendar and vote in March.





## Civil War Valentines from the Kansas Museum of History

Valentine cards have been a popular way to send affectionate greetings for many years. These examples date from the Civil War. The switch from handmade to manufactured Valentine's cards began during the 1840s. By the start of the Civil War, many manufacturers were marketing the cards to soldiers far away from their loved ones. This large paper Valentine (right) has an embossed border. It is glued with scrap: a classical bust at top, floral spray at center, and leaves at the bottom. Between the leaves at the bottom of the card is a small piece of paper printed with this short verse:

*Fondly I gaze in  
Thy sweet face,  
And clasp thy little  
Hand in mine,  
Love swiftly speeds  
Us to the place  
Where I shall claim  
My Valentine.*

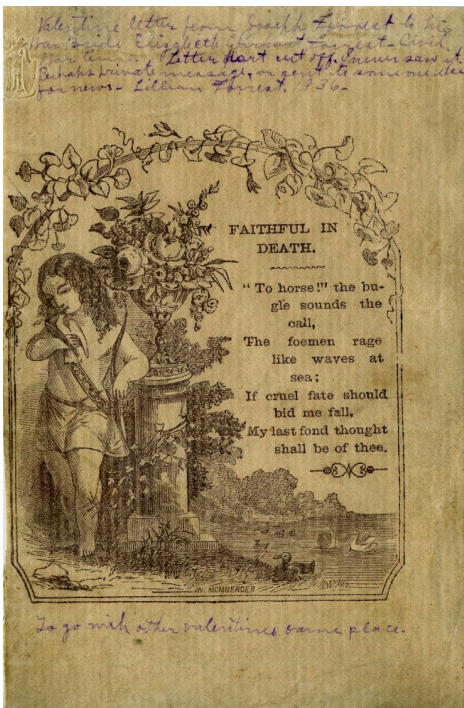


The cards pictured here were sent by Joseph Forrest to Elizabeth Ehrhart during the Civil War. Joseph and Elizabeth, both residents of Macon County, Illinois, became engaged in 1858, three years before the start of the hostilities. They delayed marriage at first because of Elizabeth's young age, secondly because of some business concerns, and thirdly because of the war.

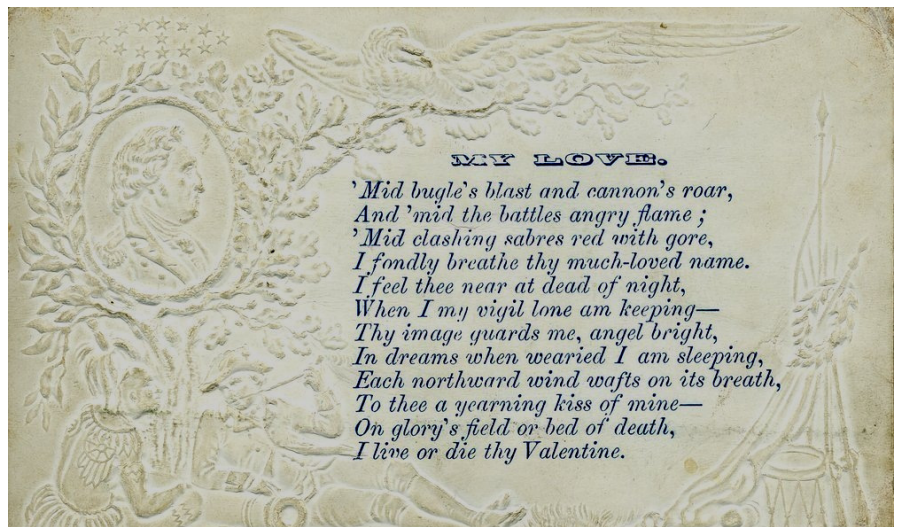
Joseph enlisted on July 25, 1861, at Decatur, Illinois. He was mustered into service as a private in Company A of the Eighth Illinois Volunteer Infantry. The couple decided to wed on Joseph's first furlough, which unfortunately for them didn't occur for another two years. When Joseph finally returned to Macon County to marry Elizabeth, he also was on a mission to uncover deserters hiding in the area. The couple married on August 9, 1863, and (according to family lore) spent much of their honeymoon riding around the countryside on horseback in pursuit of runaway soldiers.

The Forrests' first child was born in 1864 while Joseph was recovering in a New Orleans hospital from wounds suffered at a battle near Jackson, Mississippi. This daughter died shortly after birth. Joseph was honorably discharged at Marshall, Texas, in July 1865, because of wounds which, according to his papers, caused him to be "Incapacitated for seven months, in hospitals all that time." Liver and lung damage would adversely affect his health for years.

Four more children were born to the Forrests after the war. Deciding that Kansas might be good for Joseph's weakened health, the family moved to Jewell County in the spring of 1872, where Joseph served as a Methodist minister. In March 1875, they moved to Minneapolis, Kansas. A few months later, after preaching at several sites, Joseph sickened and died. He was 35 years old, and left behind a wife and four children. Elizabeth stayed in Kansas, enduring the deaths of two more children from diphtheria in 1876. Although Joseph had never filed for a veteran's pension on ethical grounds (the funds came from a whiskey tax), financial difficulties forced Elizabeth to apply for a war widow's pension. She proved up the Forrest homestead claim herself, and lived in Kansas until she died in 1920.



The Valentine at bottom right is embossed with scenes depicting the American Revolutionary War or perhaps an earlier conflict. All three were saved and eventually archived at the Kansas State Museum.





# **Battery Profile**

## **Richard Lansing Dawley**

Richard Lansing Dawley was born in Galen, Wayne County, New York, on March 26, 1826. He was raised by his uncle as by 1830, both of his parents were gone. When Richard was 20, he was in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and decided to enlist in the 6th Regiment of U.S. Infantry. The Mexican War needed soldiers and Richard was one of them, enlisting on August 13, 1846, for a five year enlistment. He served under Captain John Todd in Company A. The company saw action in the battles of Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Cherebusco, Chapultepec, and Mexico City before Richard was discharged at Fort Ripley, Minnesota, on August 13, 1851.

By 1853, Richard had married Mary Jane Averill and they were living in Plymouth, Wisconsin, when their first child, William, was born. Charles was the next son and by the time their first daughter, Ida, was born, the family was living in Winona County, Minnesota. The 1860 census recorded a taxable real estate value of \$300 and personal estate valued at \$1500. Various records show his occupation as both farmer and mill worker.



Richard Dawley, ca. 1862.

In 1862, another war called Richard. He decided to enlist on January 28, enlisting as a private in the Second Minnesota Battery of Artillery. His experience with artillery in the Mexican War may have helped him as he was promoted to Second Lieutenant on February 28th, 1862. Richard helped form the Second Battery, returning to Winona to recruit men for the unit. His name is credited with many men from Winona County. Another promotion to First Lieutenant came to Richard in October, 1862, just after the battle at Perryville, Kentucky. With the new rank came added responsibilities. The morning reports note that he took the Third Section out on picket patrol on April 15th and they remained on duty for five days. Richard was present at the Battle of Chickamauga and assumed command of the Battery after the other lieutenant was wounded in the fighting. On the 24th of November, 1863, Richard was in command of the right section and they joined the battle as the Union Army made its break out of Chattanooga, Tennessee. They remained on the line for two days.

Things did not go smoothly for Richard. It appears Richard had some conflicts with his commanding officer, Captain William Hotchkiss. Both were veterans of the Mexican War, both had prior experience with artillery, yet they did not get along. On January 15, 1864, Richard was relieved of command and placed under arrest by Captain Hotchkiss. The statement made by Hotchkiss

read, "This officer has not been able to cooperate with his superior and commanding officer because he is not disposed to do so. He has uniformly been very inefficient, has been clannish with the men of the Bty. and thereby kept up dissatisfaction among them. His commanding officer has borne with his irregularities with unaccountable patience until recently when he was compelled to have him arraigned before a court martial."

The charges were dated April 5, 1864. That same day, Richard wrote his letter of resignation, stating the reason was his "inability to cooperate with the Comdg officer of said Battery." The official acceptance of Richard's resignation made note that it was done for "the good of the service."

The enlisted men of the Second Battery, however, had a different opinion of Lieutenant Dawley. The noncommissioned officers and men of the Battery took up a "voluntary subscription" and bought an engraved sword, sash, and belt for Richard as a parting gift. In the speech to present the sword, the men remarked how Richard was "unremitting in those attentions which are conducive to our welfare, sharing alike with us in the danger and glory of the battlefield"; his qualities that marked him as a "gentleman," and how his "judgment, coolness, and bravery" had "won their admiration and commanded their respect." The news writer who reported on the presentation did comment that Richard was not a speech maker and his remarks were brief, but "accorded so well with his well-known quiet and unassuming manner that the boys felt that which language failed to convey to them."

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## ***Dawley, Continued***

Richard returned to Winona County after his resignation was accepted where he remained with his family. Another bit of bad luck overtook him as he got home. The army had given Richard his pay in a check for \$200. Richard signed the check over to his wife, Mary and she endorsed it, but before it got to the bank, it was lost. Richard took out an ad in the *Winona Daily Republican* newspaper offering a "liberal reward" for the return of the check. Nothing in the paper ever noted if Richard got the check back or not.

The 1870 census showed the family living in St. Charles, Winona County, Minnesota, and that the family had grown to include six children. Richard was farming and the value of his real estate was \$4000. A seventh child, Frank, was born in 1872, and the last child, Henry, born in 1874. It is suspected that this last baby may have been too much for Mary Jane. She died two weeks after Henry was born, her death coming on April 4, 1874. She was laid to rest in the Hillside Cemetery in St. Charles. Less than five months later, little Henry joined his mother in Hillside Cemetery.

Richard stayed in St. Charles and, though his military days were over, he was known as "captain" from his service in the local militia.

In 1883, notices appeared in the DeSmet newspapers that Charles had gone to Minnesota to visit his father. Shortly after, sale ads appeared in the Minnesota papers for Richard's home in St. Charles. In November 21, 1883, the following article ran in the St. Charles paper: *R.L. Dawley has gone to De Smet, D.T (Dakota Territory), having sold his residence property here. The Captain has long been a resident here, and will be missed from our midst; but we suppose the "new countree" has attractions which are hard to resist.*

The attractions were simple. Richard had two sons living there, land was cheap, and the new community of DeSmet was just getting established. Richard did not take a homestead, but lived in a house Charles built in DeSmet. Both Charles and his brother, Hiram, were in the lumber business there.

Richard was active in his new community and was the roads commissioner until his health began to fail.

In 1887, Richard was still living in De Smet when he filed for his military pension. He did not file as a Civil War veteran, but rather as a Mexican War veteran. This may have had something to do with the circumstances under which he resigned from the Second Minnesota Battery. His disability was listed as an "abscess of the liver" and he was unable to make a living for himself any longer. He was 61 years old.

On February 13, 1888, Richard succumbed to what was called blood poisoning. He left seven children and his body was brought back to St. Charles to be buried beside his wife in Hillside Cemetery. The funeral was held under the auspices of the Grand Army of the Republic, but his grave was not marked until the spring of 2003 when members of the Second Minnesota Battery of Reenactors ordered and placed a stone for their own "Lieutenant Dawley".

***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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