

## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# ***“ACTION FRONT”***

Circular No. 196

March 2012

### **On This Date-150 Years Ago**

#### **March, 1862**

Recruiting continued in the Battery in March of 1862, replacing a couple of men who transferred out to other units and continuing to fill crews for the guns. Lieutenants Dawley and Woodbury were recruiting in their home counties despite Hotchkiss' declaration of being at full strength at the end of February.

That might have been a bit of a stretch on the Captain's part as the morning reports show 23 more men were mustered in before the Battery was formally accepted in the service of the United States on March 21st.

One of the men who was mustered into the Battery on the same day it was accepted was Alfred Townsend. Alfred had not come to Fort Snelling alone, his wife, Sylvia, had accompanied him. She didn't want to wait on the farm where they were living in Rice County, so she went to Captain Hotchkiss and asked to be accepted as a laundress for the Battery. We don't know what that all involved for her, but she was accepted as the laundress on March 22, 1862. She stayed with Alfred at the fort, perhaps taking in washing from the men even before they left for the South.

The men were drilling daily, using guns that were at the fort, and according to reports, they were becoming "proficient" with them. A drawing from a period magazine showed the gun drills as taking place overlooking the Mississippi River below the cliff.

#### **Next Meeting**

**March 17, 11:00 a.m.**

Marie's Restaurant, Red Wing



### **Upcoming Events**

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

This is our Battery organizational "annual meeting" where officers are elected. This year, both military officers and corporate officers are up for election. **You must have your 2012 regular member dues paid to vote in these elections.**

##### **Corporate officers:**

President	(currently John Cain)
Vice President/Secretary	(currently John Watkins)
Treasurer	(currently Daryl Duden)
Newsletter Editor	(currently Vickie Wendel)

The newsletter editor is a new "elected" position, added by request at the February meeting. Vickie started doing the newsletter in 1997 and wanted to make the position available to anyone who might want it. It was her thought that having it as an elected position would make others more comfortable in saying they would like to do the newsletter. HOWEVER, she insists that if someone wants it, she will not be hurt or feel bad over it and would not oppose anyone in an election for the position.

##### **Military Officers:**

Lieutenant	(currently John Cain)
Quartermaster Sergeant	(currently Jim Rosasco)
Sergeant	(currently Daryl Duden)
Corporal	(currently Ron Graves)
Corporal	(currently Jay Overby)

**The other major item on the agenda is the 2012 CALENDAR. Everyone received a tentative calendar by email or at the last meeting on paper. Please look it over and decide which events you plan to attend.**

**If you cannot be at the meeting on the 17th, please send your list of events to John Cain by March 15. Who can attend is vital for planning as we always need a gun crew to put an event on the calendar.**

**With everyone's input, the calendar will be finalized and voted on at the March meeting.**

# Civil War Trust Website — Shiloh

The Civil War Trust has outstanding websites on many battle of the Civil War. The sites include maps, articles, photos, overviews, little known facts, “must see” sites if you visit and much, much more. This article was copied from their website with the hope that it will entice you to check their websites and learn more about what this organization has online.

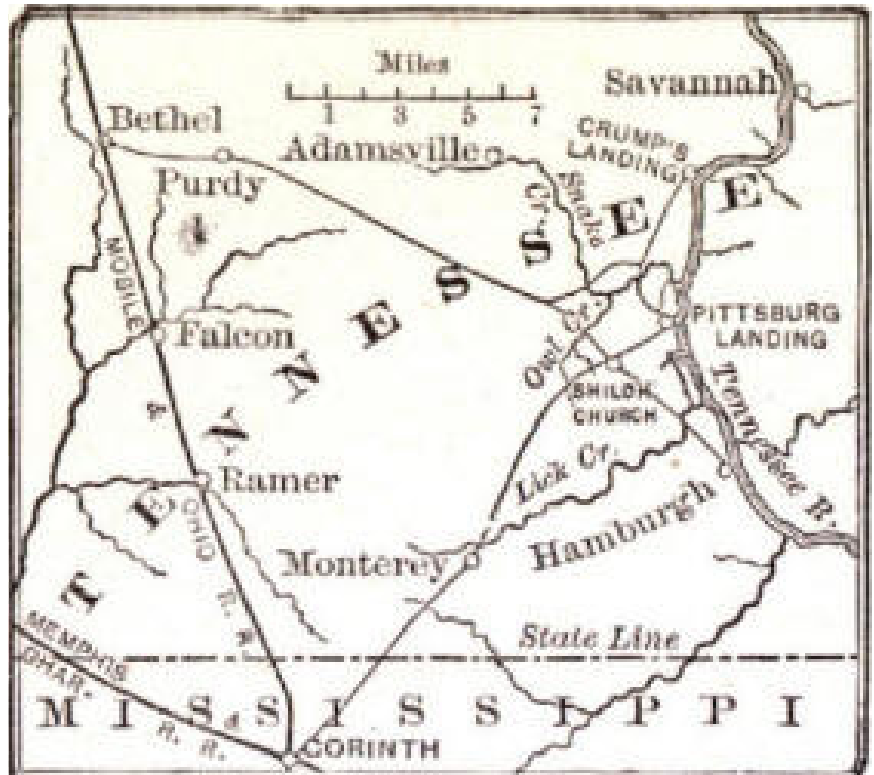
<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/shiloh.html?gclid=CNnk3JDD0q4CFSQCQAod1IjQcG>

## The Battle of Shiloh-

Following fall of Forts Henry and Donelson in February of 1862, the commander of Confederate forces in the West, Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, was compelled to withdraw from Kentucky, and leave much of western and middle Tennessee to the Federals. To prepare for future offensive operations, Johnston marshalled his forces at Corinth, Mississippi—a major transportation center. The Confederate retreat was a welcome surprise to Union commander Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, whose Army of the Tennessee would need time to prepare for its own offensive along the Tennessee river. Grant's army made camp at Pittsburg Landing where it spent time drilling raw recruits and awaiting reinforcements in the form of Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio. Johnston needed to strike Grant at Pittsburg Landing before the two Federal armies could unite.

Aware of Grant's location and strength—and that more Yankees were on the way—Johnston originally planned to attack the unfortified Union position on April 4, but weather and other logistical concerns delayed the attack until April 6. The Confederate's morning assault completely surprised and routed many of the unprepared Northerners. By afternoon, the a few stalwart bands of Federals established a battle line along a sunken road, known as the “Hornets Nest.” After repeated attempts to carry the position, the Rebels pounded the Yankees with massed artillery, and ultimately surrounded them. Later in the day Federals established a defensive line covering Pittsburg Landing, anchored with artillery and augmented by Buell's men, who had begun to arrive. Fighting continued until after dark, but the Federals held. Though they had successfully driven the Yankees back, there was, however, one significant blow to the Confederate cause on April 6. Johnston had been mortally wounded early during the day and command of the Confederate force fell to Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard. With the addition of Buell's men, the Federal force of around 40,000 outnumbered Beauregard's army of fewer than 30,000. Beauregard, however, was unaware of Buell's arrival. Therefore, when William Nelson's division of Buell's army launched an attack at 6:00 am on April 7, Beauregard immediately ordered a counterattack. Though Beauregard's counter thrust was initially successful, Union resistance stiffened and the Confederates were compelled to fall back and regroup. Beauregard ordered a second counterattack, which halted the Federals' advance but ultimately ended in stalemate. By this point, Beauregard realized he was outnumbered and, having already suffered tremendous casualties, broke contact with the Yankees to began a retreat to Corinth.

On the morning of April 6, 1862, 40,000 Confederate soldiers under the command of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston poured out of the nearby woods and struck a line of Union soldiers occupying ground near Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. The overpowering Confederate offensive drove the unprepared Federal forces from their camps and threatened to overwhelm Ulysses S. Grant's entire command. Some Federals made determined stands and by afternoon, they had established a battle line at the sunken road, known as the “Hornet's Nest.” Repeated Rebel attacks failed to carry the Hornet's Nest, but massed artillery helped to turn the tide as Confederates surrounded the Union troops and captured, killed, or wounded most. During the first day's attacks, Gen. Johnston was mortally wounded and was replaced by P.G.T. Beauregard. Fighting continued until after dark, but the Federals held. By the next morning, the reinforced Federal army numbered about 40,000, outnumbering Beauregard's army of less than 30,000. Grant's April 7th counteroffensive overpowered the weakened Confederate forces and Beauregard's army retired from the field. The two day battle at Shiloh produced more than 23,000 casualties and was the bloodiest battle in American history at its time.



Map of the campaign from Harpers Magazine, 1862.



This article appeared on April 20, 1901 in the *Minneapolis Tribune*. Wish we knew who the "Anoka" man was!

# POKER GAME NOT FINISHED

**ANOKA MAN TELLS INTERESTING  
STORY OF GAMBLING DURING  
THE CIVIL WAR.**

**Battery Boys Faked an Explosion and  
Stole the Jackpot.**

There is no end to the good stories which the veterans of the civil war have stowed away in their memories.

When The Tribune found L. Worth, a well known veteran who lives at Anoka, at the Hotel Nicollet yesterday, he did not look as if he had anything to say that would interest the public, but a little questioning drew out of him one of the best poker stories that has yet been told.

"In the winter of 1862 the union army was in camp near the Rappahannock river, in Virginia," said Mr. Worth. "We were all camped in little log cabins about seven by nine feet in size. Two soldiers in our regiment who occupied one of these cabins were professional army gamblers, and when pay day came they would reap a rich harvest playing draw poker. As soon as the boys were paid off these men would call them in to play a game, and when they had cleaned up the men in their own regiment, they would levy on other organizations."

**BATTERY BOYS CALLED.**

"There was a battery camped near us, and one night when two of the battery boys came over to play poker, they brought a couple of shells as presents, to be used as andirons in the cabin. They said the powder had all been drawn from the shells, and so the latter were placed on end near the fire. After 'taps' had sounded, the curtains were drawn, and poker playing commenced.

"When playing had been under way for some time the gamblers secretly changed packs. This was their game, the new pack being 'fixed.' The cards were dealt out, and the betting began to run up into the hundreds.

"Just at this time one of the battery boys rose and stepped to the fire place to light his pipe. Suddenly there was a sharp, whizzing noise and the artilleryman yelled: 'We are dead, the shell is going to bust.' The two gamblers did not stop to open the camp door, but broke through it without any apologies, and none too soon, for in an instant there was a tremendous explosion, and the top of the cabin was blown clear off.

**BLOWN CLEAR OFF.**

**THE GAMBLERS RETREATED.**

"The gamblers thought the other men were surely dead, but in a minute they came running out, saying: 'Lookout, the other one is going to explode.' The gamblers retreated to a safe distance, but nothing happened, and when they returned the artillerymen were gone, and with them all the 'jock-pot.' The near-by battery was at that time called the 'Lincoln Guns,' and the shells used were three inches. These shells held only a little powder, and as one man said, the explosion would not harm a setting hen. The boys had knocked off the canvas top of the cabin, and during the commotion had taken the money and skipped.

**PUNISHED FOR STEALING.**

"The next morning when we went over to see the battery drill, we found the two boys lashed down on the 'fifth wheel' of the caisson, with the horses pulling them round and round on the frozen ground. They had been hauled up for stealing government stores. Every time the battery horses came past the two gamblers the latter would greet the bound artillerymen with loud shouts for the union.

"The inefficiency of the Lincoln guns and shells mentioned above was well shown at Gettysburg. The confederates had 150 of the old brass Napoleon guns at that battle, and when the contest was over we found 1,200 horses, and double that number of union soldiers who had been killed by the big shots. The union side had over 150 of the little Lincoln guns, but after the battle not a man or horse of the confederates could be found who had been harmed by the union battery."



A photo from the Centennial Library event showing more of the new interpretation from the ladies. Many of their ideas came from the copy of an original 1864 St. Paul, Minnesota, Sanitary Commission hand booklet that they recent received. Another bit of research came from a newspaper article recounting how the Mississippi Valley fairs (from St. Paul to Chicago to St. Louis) had raised nearly \$500,000 that season! The ladies of the Battery are now determined to do their part!!

BTW, the Battery ladies decided Soldier's Aid Society was a more fitting organization for them, since the initials are SAS!



# Recap

## February 11, Winter Camp, Centennial Library, Circle Pines

It was real winter for this event! The temps hit all of 3 with a stiff north wind, but inside the council chambers was warm and filled with visitors from the moment the door opened. Library staff counted 101 visitors in the three hour event. They were THRILLED to have that many people in this small community!



Pvt. Wendel set up his tent, Pvt. Ritchie had his small arms display, Bugler Bill delighted everyone with his bugle calls, and the Lt. put on a grand display of artifacts and flags, assisted by other soldiers of the Battery. The ladies put out everything they could find to create a Soldiers Aid Society Fair for a new impression that was very popular. Miss Katie's banner drew a lot of attention to the fair tables and everyone was kept busy with visitors who stayed and stayed and stayed! That was something the library staff noted—how LONG people stayed at the event! It was a fun day! It was also quite fun to startle the local Pizza Hut when we all trooped in (in period clothing) for lunch and a meeting. We kind of overwhelmed them—they had one waitress and one cook working and we were fourteen! We probably at least doubled their business for the afternoon!



## Battery Profile

### John Henry Arnell

John was born in Monroe, Orange County, New York on February 20, 1836. He arrived in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 10, 1857, and went to work for William Murphy as a harness maker. He later went into business for himself and became only the third harness maker in the Minnesota Territory. His partner was John Conover, but the partnership didn't last long. Conover sold out in 1860 and left John alone in the business. John was living in Hassen Township, Hennepin County, Minnesota, when he joined the Battery on March 6, 1862. He was 28 years old, stood 5' 7" tall, had hazel eyes, light hair and a sandy complexion.

John's job with the Battery may have saw him fixing a lot of harnesses as he was listed as Battery Artificer.

Army life was hard on John's health as he was left sick at Winchester, Tennessee on August 17, 1863. He returned to the Battery and re-enlisted in March of 1864. He was again left sick in the hospital at Nashville, Tennessee, on June 8, 1864. His health evidently did not improve. He was discharged for disability on February 16, 1865. The certificate listed "consumption of more than eight months" in duration as the cause for discharge.

John returned to Minneapolis and went back to his trade of harness making. John was first married to Marry Millett, but divorced her in 1872. Continuing in the harness making business, John took a partner, L. Christleib, in August of 1874. John also took another kind of partner that year, he married Francis Elizabeth Peet on September 23rd. They had two children, Paul B. and Mabel.

In 1883, John was receiving a pension of \$14.00 per month. His disability was listed as "lung dis. & pleurisy". At the 1890 census, John was living on Central Avenue in Minneapolis.

John had traveled to the home of his son in Winnipeg, Canada, when he died there on March 26, 1917. John's body was brought back to Minneapolis and buried in the family plot in Lakewood Cemetery.



***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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