



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 206

March 2013

## On This Date-150 Years Ago

### Remarks for the Month of March, 1863

(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

- 1 The six men - C. Denlinger, W. Kinhead, H. A. Siamonds, F. Averill, J. M. Lane & F. S. Flint captured by rebels on Feb 6th were Erroneously taken from the aggregate of Enlisted Men -- are this day reported as "Absent, captured by Rebels, Feb 6"
- 3 Giles C. Wiltse joined Co. for duty  
Privates Silas B. Anway & Anson B. Douglas joined bat. for duty -- Transferred from 101st Ohio Infy. by Special order of Jeff C. Davis - No. 34 Feb. 28 '63
- 6 Edwin A. Whitefield returned from Hosp to duty
- 9 Arty marched to from 12 miles --- Sergt. Tristram Tidd & private Henry S. Hill discharged
- 10 Marched from camp a Marseilles to Triune 13 miles
- 13 Marched 7 miles toward Eagleville
- 14 " 8 " toward Marseilles
- 15 " 12 " to camp near Murfreesboro
- 18 Marched 4 miles out on Salem pike -- camp near Salem
- 19 Rec'd notice of discharge of Jas. Hunter Feb 15 1863 at Perryville, Kentucky, for Disability
- 21 Rec'd official notice of Discharge of Perry Fisher Feby 19 1863 at St. Louis, Mo. for disability
- 22 Marched to Murfreesboro
- 24 Capt. Hotchkiss returned from Minn.
- 25 Received notice of discharge of Alfred Townson & Hilarius Schmidt
- 26 Corp'l Jos. C. Varney, Privt's John L. Kimball & M. V. Fossum sent to Hosp. No. 2 Murfreesboro.
- 29 Received Notice of Discharge of Charles Ford at Louisville, Ky, Mch 7 -- for Disability
- 30 Privates C. F. Harder Co. A. John King Co A., T Rebadue, Co. B., M. Stump Co F., Chas Morehouse Co G., J. Rohrer Co H. L. H. Fahnestock C. I transferred from 101st Ohio Vols. by Special Orders No. 41 - Brig. Genl. Jeff C. Davis - to date from March 1st 1863 -- joined for duty Mch 31 1863
- 31 Corpl Joy promoted to Sergt. Private Daniel Frye promoted to Corporal --  
Co Orders No. 17.

## Upcoming Events

### March 23, Elections & Calendar Planning

This is our Battery organizational "annual meeting" where officers are elected. This year, military officers are up for election, but we do have a vacancy in the corporate officers.. **You must have your 2013 regular member dues paid to vote in these elections.**

#### Corporate officer vacancy:

Vice President/Secretary

#### Military Officers:

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lieutenant             | (currently John Cain)     |
| Quartermaster Sergeant | (currently Keith Stinson) |
| Sergeant               | (currently Daryl Duden)   |
| Corporal               | (currently John Watkins)  |
| Corporal               | (currently Jay Overby)    |

**The other major item on the agenda is the 2013 CALENDAR. Thre is a tentative calendar on page three of this newsletter. Please look it over and decide which events you plan to attend.**

**If you cannot be at the meeting on the 23rd, please send your list of events to John Cain by March 21. 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.**

***2013 Dues are due! See the last page for renewal form.***

### Next Meeting

**Saturday, March 23, 11:00 am**

Marie's Underground Dining, Red Wing, MN



# Battery Profile

## David William Coulthard

David's parents were Scottish immigrants to Canada where David was born about 1838. Various records give conflicting years for his birth. By 1862, David had moved from Canada to Minnesota and was working as a saddler in St. Cloud, Stearns County, when he chose to enlist in the Second Battery of Light Artillery. He signed his enlistment papers on August 13 when the Battery had officers in the state recruiting as the unit was already serving in the south.

David said he was 24 years old, had blue eyes, light hair and a fair complexion. He stood 5' 9-3/4" tall and was paid a \$25 bounty at his enlistment.

The duties to which David was assigned fitted his prewar occupation when he reached the Battery at the end of September. He was made an artificer, a person in charge of the military hardware the Battery needed to function.

Civil War camps were not always good places for young men who had never been exposed to the diseases fostered by crowded human conditions and David fell victim to poor health shortly after the battle at Perryville, Kentucky. He was sent to the hospital in Nashville on November 13 and remained there five months, his discharge from the hospital coming on April 19, 1863. David believed that exposure to the weather while on the Perryville campaign caused him to contract typhoid fever.

When he was finally well enough to return, David's duties were changed to make him the saddler for the Battery, again, a job suited to his prewar occupation, but it was not a long assignment. David was soon sent on detached service at Stevenson, Alabama, where he remained until December.

By March of 1864, many of the men who had enlisted in the Battery as it was forming up were eligible to reenlist and get a 30 day veterans furlough. Having not enlisted until August, David was not yet eligible, so he was sent to serve with the other Battery men not reenlisting on the guns of the Battery I, Second Illinois Light Artillery. David was with them when they fought some of the difficult battles on the march to Atlanta, Georgia.

When the men sent to the Illinois Battery went back to their own Minnesota Battery on October 16, 1864, David was with them, but their fighting was limited during the rest of the war. The Second Battery was assigned to garrison duty in Tennessee and saw little more hard fighting with the Confederates.

Trees, however, were an enemy upon which the Union Army continued to mount assaults. Many men of the Battery were detailed to cut logs for the garrison. David was assigned to this duty from December of 1864 to April of 1865.

By June of 1865, the war had ended and the men were being sent home. Troops were arranged and rearranged as this mustering out began and the Second Battery was given orders to move by freight train from Philadelphia, Tennessee, to Knoxville, Tennessee. Men filled the cars and many were sitting on the roofs as they traveled. Many of the Second Battery chose to ride on the roofs and their ideas conflict as to where was a better place to be when the cars began jumping the tracks and rolling down an embankment.

David was on top and he decided jumping was a better plan than riding the car down. He said the jump was

a little over 20 feet, but since the train was moving, it magnified the impact and he was thrown against some timbers laying there. The shins of both legs were badly scraped, the right leg being scraped to the bone from ankle to knee. David was treated as best as he could be by the men around him as there was no surgeon on the train.

Other men in the Battery who described the wreck said the jump David and others made was anywhere from 15 to 50 feet, but all note the steep embankment and timbers piled along it. The car David was riding on did not go fully over the embankment, instead it hung by the coupling.

The injuries did not prevent David and the men of the Battery from going back to Fort Snelling to be mustered out of the Army on August 16, 1865. David served three years and three days.

David remained in Minnesota and married Mary C. Kuntsman on January 10, 1871, in Shakopee. The 1880 census listed them living in Loreno in Brown County. Now they had a daughter named Mary and a son named Walter. David's brother-in-law was also living with them. David was working as a mail agent.

In 1891, David filed for an invalid's pension. He cited the continuing trouble he was having with his legs and hips as the primary cause for his application, but he noted deafness and rheumatism as well. The pension was approved, but for disease of the kidneys. By then, the family had moved again; they were then living in Fairmont in Martin County.

David's health was failing and on December 4, 1894, he breathed his last. His obituary noted he had struggled with his health for years, but it had seemed as if things were getting better until "that dreaded disease pneumonia attacked him and marked him for its victim."

The newspaper cited David as a "bright, intelligent, generous-hearted citizen, kind and affectionate in his family and liberal in all the impulses of heart and brain."

The funeral was conducted through the Episcopal Church in Fairmont and the Masonic Lodge provided their honors at the graveside in Lakeview Cemetery in Fairmont.

A white marble veteran's marker was placed on David's grave, but at some point, the marker was laid flat rather than standing upright as was intended. Grass, leaves and dirt eventually covered the stone as it lay and it began to sink until it was completely hidden. Cemetery records were vague and only a reference to the Coulthard's buying a plot in section 59 could be found, and even then the name was spelled quite differently. Church records provided proof that David was buried there and a careful inspection of the area finally turned up a tiny glimpse of a stone with no engraving visible. When the sod was cut off and the mud scraped away, the lettering proved that it was David's stone. Members of the reenacting Battery saw to it that arrangements were made to have the stone reset in the upright position over David's final resting place.



## **Tentative 2013 Schedule**

April 27-28 – Keokuk, IA Battle reenactment  
May 1 — Bluffview, School  
May 10—Eagle Point, Oakdale  
May 13 — Calvin Christian, Edina  
May 23 — Oakdale Elem, Oakdale  
May 27 — Memorial Day event in Red Wing, MN  
June ? – Rum River Library event  
June 15-16 — Wasioja, MN battle reenactment  
July 4 and 6 — Commemoration event at Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul  
July 4-7 — National Event at Gettysburg, PA  
July 13-14 — Seminole Valley, IA Battle reenactment and encampment  
August 4-4 – Boscobel, WI Battle reenactment  
August 24-25 – Ahlman's, Morristown, MN Gun firing demos  
September 27-29 — Wade House, Greenbush, WI  
December ? — Christmas at the Library

This calendar is not yet official as there has not been a vote. This is to help all members in deciding which events you can attend as this will determine whether we can accept the event as a Battery. We need a gun crew to be able to attend. The vote on the calendar will take place at the March meeting, so check your calendars and know which events you plan to attend.

## ***Something Else From March of 1863***

(excerpted from an article online)

The Enrollment Act, enacted March 3, 1863, also known as the Civil War Military Draft Act, was legislation passed by the United States Congress to provide fresh manpower for the Union Army. A form of conscription, the controversial act required the enrollment of every male citizen and those immigrants who had filed for citizenship between ages twenty and forty-five. Federal agents established a quota of new troops due from each congressional district. In some cities, particularly New York City, enforcement of the act sparked civil unrest as the war dragged on, leading to the New York Draft Riots on July 13–16.

The policies of substitution and commutation were controversial practices that allowed drafted citizens to opt out of service by either furnishing a suitable substitute to take the place of the drafted, or paying \$300. Both of these provisions were created with the intention of softening the effect of the draft on pacifists, the anti-draft movement, and the propertied classes. The result however was general public resentment of both policies. These two practices were major points of contention among the general public and led directly to the slogan "rich man's war, poor man's fight."

The policy of substitution was continued throughout the war. The problem with substitution was that it provided substitutes with powerful incentives to desert soon after enlisting. Career "jumpers" made a living off of enlisting as a substitute, collecting their compensation, deserting before their units were dispatched to the front, and repeating the process. This problem was well known to the military commanders who regularly saw the same recruits repeatedly. In addition, troops furnished through substitution were considered to be of an inferior quality in comparison to regulars and volunteers.

Commutation (paying \$300 to escape the draft) was created in an effort to keep substitution prices low. If commutation were not instated, the price of a substitute would have quickly soared past \$300. In addition to suppressing substitution prices, commutation was intended to raise money for the war effort. While commutation did raise war funds, it was often a criticism of the draft that it was better at raising money than troops. The rationalization for commutation was that unwilling troops were ineffective, so the government may as well extract funds from the unwilling if it couldn't get proficient service. Despite the good intentions behind commutation, it was one of the most hated policies of the war.

# Recap

## January 26, HUSH Movie Preview

This was a fun chance to see the movie and talk with its creator. We had a good discussion with him about the war, its causes, and the First Minnesota. After the discussion, we ordered pizza and held our regular meeting. Following the meeting, several members explored the exhibit hall of the Anoka County Historical Society.

## February 23, Winter Camp

We set up a camp and a SAS meeting in the meeting room of the Fridley Mississippi Branch of the Anoka County Library. We had nine members of the Battery present and put on a good show for about 75 visitors. While we thought it was a bit slower than some of our other events in the library system, the library staff was quite happy with the turnout. Being a smaller branch library, having 75 people at anything was great.



The SAS collection has grown to be almost as much to haul around as our camp kitchen! (But without the iron.) Miss Katie “solicited” items from visitors at the tables while Mrs. Wendel scraped and picked lint—and she got every visitor she could to pick a little lint with her as well! Mrs. Overby had by far the most popular interpretation based on number of photos taken—young Master Tristan. He was dressed in his 1860s finery and all smiles, so people loved him.



Private Ritchie had a grand display of long and side arms. Private Crowder raised the roof with his bugle calls, Lt. Cain hung lots of flags and really added color to our event. Private Wendel had his tent set up with his bed made and a new addition—the small cast iron stove the Battery purchased last summer. It looked great inside the tent with his stove pipe and all set up! Corporal Overby floated from area to area as was needed to chat with people whenever they had questions. Over all, it was a very nice event.



***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.***

***For information on the Battery, please contact:***

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## **Your Country Needs You!**

### **And so does the Battery!**

**2013 dues are DUE!!** To remain on the active/voting member list, your dues are:

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Civilian Member          | \$12.00 |
| Military Member          | \$12.00 |
| Associate Member         | \$ 6.00 |
| Junior Member (14-17)    | \$ 6.00 |
| Junior Member (under 14) | Free    |

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please give or mail this form and your check to:

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