



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 226

April—May 2015

## On This Date-150 Years Ago

### A timeline of April, 1865

**April 2** - Grant's spring offensive begins a general advance and breaks through Lee's lines at Petersburg. Confederate Gen. Ambrose P. Hill is killed. Lee evacuates Petersburg. The Confederate Capital, Richmond, is evacuated. Fires and looting break out. The next day, Union troops enter and raise the Stars and Stripes.

**April 4** - President Lincoln tours Richmond where he enters the Confederate White House. With "a serious, dreamy expression," he sits at the desk of Jefferson Davis for a few moments.

**April 9** - Gen. Robert E. Lee surrenders his Confederate Army to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at the village of Appomattox Court House in Virginia. Grant allows Rebel officers to keep their sidearms and permits soldiers to keep horses and mules.

**April 10** - Celebrations break out in Washington.

**April 14** - The Stars and Stripes is ceremoniously raised over Fort Sumter. That night, Lincoln and his wife, Mary, see the play "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater. At 10:13 p.m., during the third act of the play, John Wilkes Booth shoots the president in the head. Doctors attend to the President in the theater then move him to a house across the street. He never regains consciousness.

**April 15** - President Abraham Lincoln dies at 7:22 in the morning. Vice President Andrew Johnson assumes the presidency.

**April 18** - Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrenders to Sherman near Durham, North Carolina. Lincoln's Funeral Procession rolls down Pennsylvania Ave.

**April 26** - John Wilkes Booth is shot and killed in a tobacco barn in Virginia.

## Upcoming Events

**April 25**, Gamehaven Council BSA, 5015 Simpson Road SE, Rochester, MN

We will provide five learning stations for Scouts to rotate through for this event. Each station will last 50 minutes. The scout camp will provide lunch for Battery participants.

**May 1-3**, Springfield, IL - 150<sup>th</sup> Lincoln Funeral Train

The arrival of a replica full size historic Lincoln Funeral train and funeral car will highlight this 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. REGISTRATION IS CLOSED, so if you are not registered, you will not be allowed to participate according to event rules.

Federal artillery will fire at two ceremonies during the weekend, about 6 shots per gun. There are re-enactor shuttle buses to get folks to other venues and historic sites. Reenactor camp will be in Lincoln Park along with the sutlers, but the firing will take place at the Old State Capitol and the cemetery as it did 150 years ago.

**May 11** 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. BRING A BAG LUNCH!

**May 25** 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, Tanya Graves, for the Memorial Day service and honor volleys from our gun. RSVP to Daryl Duden or John Cain.

## Election Results!

Election results are in! Ken Cunningham is the new organizational president for the Second Battery. Special thanks and recognition are due to John Cain for his 30 years of leadership as past president of the organization.

Brian Tomashek was elected vice president, filling that vacancy.

Military leadership positions for 2015 are as follows: John Cain as lieutenant; Keith Stinson is quartermaster sergeant; Daryl Duden is sergeant, and the two corporals are Ron Graves and Michael Ritchie.

Congratulations and thanks to all for taking on the responsibilities of these leadership roles.

## Next Meeting

**May 30, 2015** **11:00am**

We will meet at Marie's Underground Dining in Red Wing. Call John Cain if you need the address or directions, (651) 388-9250.



# **Looking at the Civil War**

Excerpted from [www.historynet.com/Civil War](http://www.historynet.com/Civil War)

## **Civil War Summary**

The American Civil War, 1861–1865, resulted from long-standing sectional differences and questions not fully resolved when the United States Constitution was ratified in 1789. With the defeat of the Southern Confederacy and the subsequent passage of the XIII, XIV and XV amendments to the Constitution, the Civil War's lasting effects include abolishing the institution of slavery in America and firmly redefining the United States as a single, indivisible nation rather than a loosely bound collection of independent states.

## **Milestones**

It was a war that saw many "firsts." The long list of Civil War firsts include America's first income tax, the first battle between ironclad ships, the first extensive use of black soldiers and sailors in U.S. service, the first use of quinine to treat typhoid fever, America's first military draft, and many others. There were advances in medical treatment, military tactics, the chaplain service, and other fields. Over the course of the Civil War, weapons ranged from obsolete flintlocks to state-of-the-art repeaters. During the Civil War, women took on new roles, including running farms and plantations and spying; some disguised themselves as men and fought in battle. All of the nation's ethnic groups participated in the war, including Irish, Germans, American Indians, Jews, Chinese, Hispanics, etc.

## **Troop Strength and Casualties**

Between April 1861 and April 1865, an estimated 1.5 million troops joined the war on the side of the Union and approximately 1.2 million went into Confederate service. An estimated total of 600,000 were killed in action or died of disease. (The latest studies indicate the death toll was closer to 750,000. The 600,000 was first published in 1900. Only recently have historians looked at how that number was arrived and find the flaws in it.) More than twice that number were wounded but survived at least long enough to muster out. Casualties of the Civil War cannot be calculated exactly, due to missing records (especially on the Southern side) and the inability to determine exactly how many combatants died from wounds, drug addiction, or other war-related causes after leaving the service. An untold number of civilians also perished, primarily from disease as entire towns became hospitals.

## **The End of the Fighting**

When Federals under Phil Sheridan captured the crossroads at Five Forks, VA, cutting Lee's supply line, he withdrew from the Petersburg–Richmond trenches and headed southwest, hoping to link up with Johnston coming up from the south. Before leaving Richmond, the Confederates set fire to the town. On April 9, at Appomattox Courthouse, after discovering Federals had beaten him to a supply cache, Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Grant. Despite his nickname of "Unconditional Surrender" Grant and his policy of waging total war against the South to end the rebellion, Grant offered generous terms, realizing this surrender would virtually end the war.

Joseph Johnston surrendered to W.T. Sherman at Bentonville, North Carolina, on April 26. Sherman extended even more generous terms than Grant had, but endured the embarrassment of having to go back to Johnston with harsher conditions. Between Lee and Johnston's surrenders, an event had occurred that reduced the North's compassion toward their proud, defeated enemies.

## **Lincoln Assassinated**

On the night of April 14, John Wilkes Booth, a staunchly pro-slavery Confederate sympathizer, slipped into the President's Box at Ford's Theater in Washington and fired a single bullet into the back of Abraham Lincoln's head. Lincoln died the next morning, the first American president to be assassinated. Booth was shot weeks later while trying to escape from a barn in Virginia. All those captured who were believed to be his co-conspirators in the plot were hanged, including Mary Surratt, who owned the boarding house where the plotters met.

Jefferson Davis, who had escaped Richmond, was captured in Georgia on May 10 and imprisoned for two years at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, before being released on \$100,000 bond.

One after another, the remaining Confederate forces surrendered. Their last army in the field was surrendered by Cherokee Chief Stand Watie in Indian Territory (Oklahoma) on June 23.

## **The Last Battle**

The last land battle, a Confederate victory, occurred May 12–13 at Palmito (or Palmetto) Ranch in south Texas, where word of Lee's surrender had not yet been received. Far across the Atlantic on November 6, 1865, the sea raider CSS *Shenandoah* surrendered to a British captain; had the ship's crew surrendered in America, they risked hanging as pirates.

On Christmas Day, 1868, President Andrew Johnson issued an amnesty proclamation to all former Confederates, including Jefferson Davis. Only one Confederate was executed, Henry Wirtz, commander of the notorious prison camp at Andersonville. Officially known as Fort Sumter, Andersonville was the largest prison camp in the south and was infamous for its ill treatment of Union prisoners who lacked adequate food and medicine. Southerners have long protested that the death rate in Northern prison camps was higher than that of Andersonville, and Wirtz should not have been punished for war crimes.

# Battery Profile

## Ira Munson

Ira was farming in Winona County, Minnesota, when he decided to enlist in the Second Battery. He was mustered in on February 10, 1862, at Fort Snelling. The descriptive roll listed him as single, with blue eyes, light hair, a light complexion, and 5' 6-1/2" tall. His birth was on August 9, 1834, in Wayne County, New York.

John Gibson was Ira's neighbor before the war, Battery comrade, and friend after the war. John noted that it was after the battle at Stones River, Tennessee, on December 31, 1862, that Ira began suffering with piles. John said the piles were "very bad and the officers wanted him to go to the hospital but he refused to do so." Ira must have believed it was better to stay in camp and let the Battery's hospital steward care for him. Since the Battery did not have their own surgeon, care was provided by the men for each other or, when in camp, the surgeons of the brigade often assisted with sick call in the Battery. These were the doctors Ira relied on.

His health troubles aside, Army life proved to be something Ira was good at and he was promoted to corporal on November 3, 1863. He might have been good at it, but Ira must have decided he'd had enough of the Army a few months later when it came time to reenlist. Ira chose not to continue in Uncle Sam's Army and was sent on detached service to Battery I, Second Illinois Artillery while the Minnesota Battery went home on veteran's furlough. His friend, John Gibson, went with Ira to the Illinois Battery as he chose not to enlist, either. This put John in a position to testify to the Pension Department where Ira's hearing had been

damaged. John said he knew Ira had lost most of the hearing in one ear and partial loss in the other during the battle at the Chattahoochee River in Georgia in July of 1864. John said, "We had a very hard battle at this place." John blamed the intense firing of the cannons for Ira's hearing loss.

With the Illinois Battery, the Minnesota boys saw some hard fighting under General William Sherman's drive to Atlanta. They were sent back to the Minnesota Battery in October and Ira was mustered out the following March at Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Ira went back to Minnesota and farming in Winona County until 1871 when he moved to Plymouth County, Iowa, there he lived the rest of his life. At some point, Ira married, but the marriage ended in divorce on October 10, 1892. He was married a second time on November 29, 1899, to Martha Kynock.

Ira died on March 20, 1908, and was laid to rest in the LeMars Memorial Cemetery in LeMars, Plymouth County, Iowa





# Recap

## 28 March Civil War Symposium, Mankato

Dozens of people gathered at the Sibley Park Pavilion in Mankato for the 4th Annual Civil War Symposium sponsored by the Boy in Blue Memorial Committee. Funds from the event will be used "To rebuild and erect the 'Boy in Blue' monument in Lincoln Park that honored the courage, sacrifice, dedication and patriotism of the Blue Earth County, Minnesota Volunteer Soldier 1861 - 1865."

Attendees had the opportunity to attend one hour seminars on a wide variety of topics related to the Civil War: "Walt Whitman", "Civil War Medicine", "Divided Waters", "Bugler Bill", "Crepe Veiled Women", "With Charity for All", "School of the Soldier", "Civil War



Sharpshooters", "The Heavens Are Hung in Black", "Fife Notes" and "Robert E. Lee". Battery members who attended the event and enjoyed the free lunch were John Cain, Bill Crowder (presenter), Ken Cunningham, Daryl Duden, Michael Ritchie, Mandy Wendel and Ron Wendel.



## April 9 Bells Across the Land

In conjunction with a major event at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, the National Park Service and its partners invited communities across the

nation to join in this commemoration of the symbolic end of the Civil War. Bells first rang at Appomattox at 3:00 p.m. on April 9, 2015. The ringing coincided with the moment the historic meeting between Grant and Lee in the McLean House at Appomattox Court House ended. While Lee's surrender did not end the Civil War, the act is seen by most Americans as the symbolic end of four years of bloodshed.

After the ringing at Appomattox, bells reverberated across the country. Churches, temples, schools, city halls, public buildings, historic sites, and others were invited to ring bells precisely at 3:15 pm for four minutes (each minute symbolic of a year of war). The Anoka County Historical Society participated by ringing their

historic school bell for four minutes, inviting volunteers, patrons and staff to take their turn at ringing the bell.

Watch their bell ringing here: <https://www.facebook.com/AnokaCountyHistory/videos/10152875009817615/>

**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:

### President

John Cain  
1640 Woodland Drive  
Red Wing, MN 55066 Phone: (651) 388-9250

### Treasurer

Daryl Duden  
1210 West 4th Street  
Red Wing, MN 55066 Phone: (651) 388-6520

### Twin Cities Metro Area Contact

Ron & Vickie Wendel  
12419 Redwood Street NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55448 Phone: (763) 754-2476

E-mail: [momwendel@hotmail.com](mailto:momwendel@hotmail.com)

Battery Website:  
<http://www.2mnbattery.org>

## Exploratory Committee Formed

Discussion at the April Battery meeting resulted in the formation of a committee to explore promoting our Battery programs to increase visibility for our unit. This committee will look at options and formulate plan that could include more activities centered around Red Wing, the home base of our unit, with the Goodhue County Historical Society and/or the Red Wing Library. Daryl Duden, Michael Cunningham, and President Ken Cunningham volunteered to serve on this committee. Other interested members should contact Ken.