

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 268

June 2019

On This Date-155 Years Ago

In other theaters of the war—June 1864

Since the beginning of May 1864, Union General Ulysses S. Grant had doggedly pursued Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia along an arc around Richmond, culminating in the battle known as Cold Harbor. The massive offensive was costly to Grant's Army of the Potomac, which racked up 60,000 casualties before reaching the crossroads. After battling along the North Anna River and at Bethesda Church in late May, the armies engaged in a familiar race to the next strategic point. The Union troops arrived at Cold Harbor to find that the Confederates were already there.

On May 30, Union troops under Philip Sheridan encountered Confederates led by Fitzhugh Lee around the tavern for which the crossroads was named. The Yankees attacked and took control of the intersection but could not advance toward Richmond any further. Additional troops from each army continued to arrive through the evening of May 31.

Determined to retake the crossroads, Lee ordered a Confederate attack shortly after dawn, before more Northern troops arrived. The spirited assault was led by an inexperienced colonel named Lawrence Keitt from South Carolina, who was mortally wounded in the first Yankee volley. Soon after, the 20th South Carolina, a green regiment at the head of the attack, broke into a frantic retreat. The panic spread to other units, and the Confederate attack wilted. Sheridan's troops held the crossroads.

Grant attacked the Confederates in the late afternoon, after more Union troops had arrived. But the Yankees could not break through the Rebels' newly constructed fortifications, and so they decided to wait until the bulk of the Army of the Potomac had arrived before launching another attack. This delay proved costly. The Rebels used the time to dig trenches and construct breastworks. When the attack came on June 3, it turned into one of the biggest Union disasters of the war.

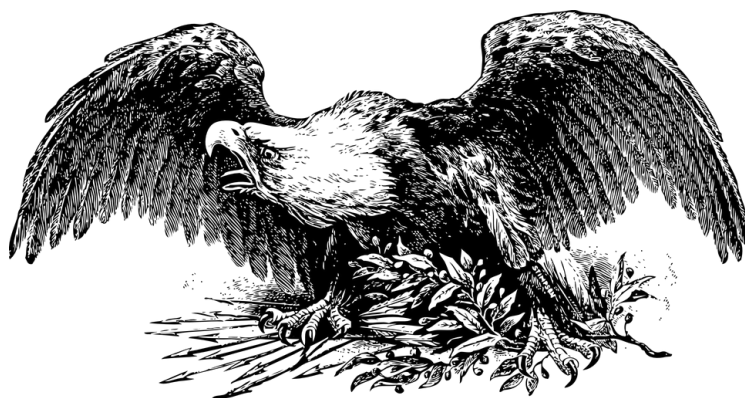
From History.com

Upcoming Events

June 16, Galesville, WI, Arnold House/Eastside Farm

19408 Silver Creek Road, Galesville, WI

This is a one day encampment event setting up some of our learning stations including the gun firing three times throughout the day. BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH (Period correct foods and wrappings if possible). See their website at: <https://www.eastsidefarm.org/>



July Events

July 13-14 Civil War Days Reenactment, Waconda, Ill [Civil War Days Reenactment](#)

July 20-21 Olmstead County Living History Fair & Reenactment, Rochester, MN [Olmstead County Living History Fair & Reenactment](#)

July 27 Prospect House Museum, Battle Lake, MN. Encampment
<http://prospecthousemuseum.org/>

Next Meeting

June 29, 2019 11:00am

Marie's Underground Dining, Red Wing
Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items. 651-388-2945.



King Cotton (A second part to the article from May)

From the blog, *Civil War Quilts* by Barbara Brackman

The wartime Cotton Famine in the U.S. resulted in increased prices for a yard of calico, the once-inexpensive mainstay of the American wardrobe and the American quilt.

I wrote about prices in the Confederacy where banknotes were so inflated that "\$200 was required to buy a calico dress" (about ten yards). Cornelia Peake McDonald recorded twenty dollars a yard for calico that had a pre-War price of twenty cents. \$20 a yard seems to be the high price recorded at the time, but in memoirs written after the war the price went higher. Virginia Clay-Clopton remembered "Calico of the commonest in those days was sold at twenty-five dollars a yard." I haven't found much in a higher price per yard since that research.

In late 1861, Davis, Abrahams & Lyon of Petersburg, Virginia, found it profitable to advertise as far away as Raleigh, North Carolina.

Looking through wartime North Carolina newspapers at the Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* website one finds a change in advertisements for "dry goods." 1861 ads enticed customers with descriptions, but by 1862, the term dry goods was enough.

Most of the ads after 1862 were for wholesale goods. Retail shops did not have to advertise if they had any dress goods for sale. Word of mouth was probably enough to create a market.

North Carolina ads like the one above offer "desirable goods...very cheap" to those interested in setting up a retail business. In June, 1862, McCubbins & Foster still had access to New York merchandise shipped south before the war.

Weekly standard. [volume], June 04, 1862
About The Potter Journal, /Coudersport, Pa., 1837-1872

BARGAINS! BARGAINS!!
Seven Thousand Dollars Worth of Desirable GOODS,
(WELL ASSORTED.)
FOR SALE AT COST AND CARRIAGE.

WE HAVE SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS' worth of very desirable STAPLE GOODS, which we offer to close out, in a lot, at cost and carriage. Over half of these Goods were purchased in New York, before the war, and are very cheap. This is a rare chance for a Merchant who wishes to go on in business. The stock consists of—

Dry Goods, Hardware, Crockery, Clothing, Hats, &c.

Those in want would do well to call soon.
McCUBBINS & FOSTER.
Salisbury, N. C., May 27, 1862. 22-w4t

Newbern progress. [volume], January 24, 1863.

BELL, FARIS & CO.,
Middle Street, between Pollock and Bond streets
have just received from New York and Boston a large assortment of

DRY GOODS, BOOTS AND SHOES, FINE GROCERIES, CROCKERY, HARDWARE, WINES, HATS, STATIONERY, TIN AND WILLOW WARE, SEGARS AND TOBACCO

Among which are Mohairs, Calicos, De Laines, Alpacas, Shawls, Embroideries, Dress Trimmings, Art. Flowers, table cloths, handkerchiefs, rubias, hoods, hosiery, gloves, ruffles, cottons, sheetings, homespun shirts, casimeres, jeans, satinets, and fancy dry goods, calf, kip and bregan boots and shoes, army and ladies' gaiters, buskins, stationary,

"Kappel's black and white Prints" (perhaps a cotton print), Clark's thread and pins.

Wilmington Journal., March 05, 1863
About The Potter Journal, /Coudersport, Pa., 1837-1872

Philadelphia Dry Goods Market.

The Philadelphia "Press" of a recent date has the following comments upon the "enormously high prices:"

In former seasons the ladies grumbled at paying twelve and a half cents per yard for bleached muslins; but they now willingly take it at thirty-seven and a half cents, and the same may be said in reference to all cotton goods. In muslins, such choice brands as the Utica Mills, Lonsdale, Wamsutta, Williamsville and scores of others (equally good, that were formerly offered for twelve and a half cents, are now eagerly sought at thirty-seven and a half cents. Cotton sheetings, two and a half yards wide, are bringing seventy-five to eighty-five cents per yard, and pillow casing in the same ratio—Cotton flannels, drillings and tickings, are held still higher, owing to the large proportion of material consumed in their production, and it is the cost of material not that of manufacturing, that is now making itself felt

In January, 1863 Bell, Faris & Co., retailers in New Bern, advertised dress goods (mohairs, calicos, delaines, alpacas and trim) "just received from New York and Boston." We can assume these were goods that ran through the Union blockade.

Wilmington, North Carolina, was the center of blockade running. This 1863 ad is for a single-day wholesale auction of goods direct from England, brought in on steamships *Douro* and *Eagle*. Items included

The *Wilmington Journal* copied a story from the Philadelphia Press complaining about prices in the Northern markets where cheap cottons formerly 12-1/2 cents were now 37-1/2 cents. Finer brands also sold at triple the pre-war price. The article mentioned the choice brands: Utica, Lonsdale, Wamsutta, and Williamsville.

In 1863, in Potter County, Pennsylvania, a retailer sold fabric "at nearly the old prices, notwithstanding the great rise of goods in New York." They still sold apron checks at 16 to 20 cents and "Good Spragues, Merrimacs, Dannelle...very nice Prints...for 11 to 12-1/2 cts, nothing over, worth 15-20 cts."

The Potter Journal., March 11, 1863, Image 3
About The Potter Journal, /Coudersport, Pa., 1837-1872

We are happy to inform all those in want of Choice and Domestic Goods, that we now have a stock of some

\$10,000,

Worth of all kinds of

DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, BOOTS AND SHOES, HATS, CAPS, CLOTHING, CROCKERY & HARDWARE, and everything usually kept in a country store. We are prepared to sell at nearly the old prices, notwithstanding the great rise of goods in New York. Our facilities are now such that we are prepared to furnish all those in want of goods at less prices than can or will be sold by any dealer in this section. Below we give you some of our prices, and also the prices the same goods are sold for by most of our neighbors.

Good Sheetings, 12 to 14 cts.
sold by most dealers for 16 to 22 cts.

Very nice bleached Goods 10 to 14 15 to 20

A large lot of Sheep's Gray and Casimeres, from 31 cts. up

Good Apron Checks and Check Shirting, 12 1/2 to 15 cts. 16 to 19

Good Gingham, 12 1/2 to 15 16 to 22

Beautiful DeLaines and Poi de Chevre, 12 to 20 20 to 31 1/2

Nice all Wool Merinos, 63 worth \$1.25 to 1.75

A large assortment of Black Silk, 75 to \$1.13 1.25 to 1.75

Fine Black Silk Shawls, \$9.00 8.00 to 9.00

And a large stock of Black Silks from 75 cts to \$1.00 worth from \$1.50 to \$1.75.

Good Spragues, Merrimacs Dannelle and many other grades of very nice Prints, new styles, warranted fast colors, Harness Checks and others, for 11 to 12 1/2 cts, nothing over, worth 15 to 20 cts.

Battery Profile

John Coleman

John left very few records behind to trace his life. He was born in Ireland about 1838. He enlisted to serve in the Second Minnesota Battery at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on May 25, 1863. The muster sheet put John at 5' 9" tall, blue eyes, brown hair and fair complexion. He told the officer in charge that his occupation was that of "soldier."

It is unclear how John was able to enlist to serve in the Battery at that time and place as the veterans were back in Minnesota on veteran's furloughs and those not reenlisting were assigned to Battery I, Second Illinois Light Artillery. John did not serve with the Minnesota Battery until June 27, 1863, according to the Battery's records.

What happened is unknown, but the consequences of it were recorded in John's compiled service records. He was arrested and sent to the guard house in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on September 8, 1864. A general court martial was convened and John was sentenced to serve time in the military prison at Nashville. Records of the proceedings to explain what he was charged with or how long he was in prison are not available.

John's muster sheets note that he was still "undergoing sentence" in Nashville at the end of 1864 and through at least the first four months of 1865. The final sheet, dated March and April 1865 stated John was still in prison and noted that he was due \$33.33 for an installment payment on his \$100 bounty.

When the Second Battery formally mustered out of the army on August 16, 1865, at Fort Snelling, John was not with them. Instead, his muster out sheet said he was still in the military prison in Nashville. It is believed he received a dishonorable discharge.

It is the last known record of John Coleman. His name is too common to make further searching possible.

An Article from the History Channel (Online Edition)

In honor of the summer season when we might encounter reptiles such as this! Since turtles are very long-lived, perhaps we should be checking them for "inscriptions!"



AN INTERESTING WAR RELIC.

From the Rome Sentinel, Ga.

A SMALL highland terrapin was captured in 1884 by a Chattanooga gentleman that carries on the smooth surface of its belly the inscription, carved in distinct characters: "Union: Co. K, 26th Regt., Ohio Vols.; November 18, 1864." It is supposed that some straggling Union soldier, belonging to the command designated, captured the North Georgia quadruped and proceeded to make a living historical tablet of the hard-shell little creeper.

That was twenty years ago. In 1886 when a party of ex-Union captives from Ohio, who were making a tour of the South, passed through Chattanooga, the terrapin was shown them and they could not have shown more delight over the meeting of an old friend. "He was the pet of some of our boys," said one of the old soldiers, as he fondly patted the terrapin's back, while the tears filled his eyes and rolled down his cheeks in great drops.

Recap

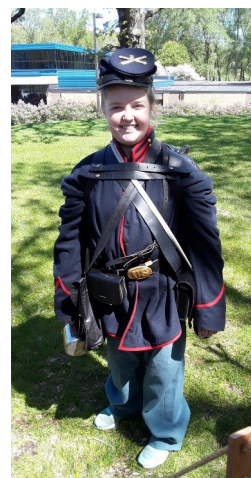
May 4-5 Spring Valley VFW, Spring Valley, MN.

Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery traveled to Spring Valley MN to participate in a Boys of '61 encampment and parade in conjunction with a V.F.W. Regional Convention. On Saturday, visitors toured the Civil War camps, watched the 1st Minnesota Infantry drill, participated in a school of the soldier conducted by Sgt. Arn Kind, listened to speeches by President Lincoln and at 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm watched dual artillery firing demonstrations with the 12 Pdr. Napoleon of Battery I 1st U.S. and the 10 Pdr. Parrott Rifle of our 2nd Minnesota Battery. There was a steady flow of people who visited our camp and spent time listening to bugle calls, learning about the Soldiers Aid Society, Roles of Women during the War and Civil War Officers. John Cain and George Luskey, board members of The Boys of '61, were under the fly of our Officers tent selling Civil War prints as a fundraiser for the Civil War monument they want to place at Fort Snelling. On Sunday, we put our cannon on the trailer and with the 1st Minnesota Infantry, President Lincoln, Battery I 1st U.S., and the New Ulm Battery, led the 1:00 pm parade. Battery members who participated during the weekend were Becky Loader, Olivia Watson, Riley Warne, Ron Graves, Tanya Graves, Michael Ritchie, Ken Cunningham, Bill Crowder, John Warne, Daryl Duden, James Livingstone and John Cain. Submitted by Sgt. Duden



May 20 Avail Academy School. Edina, MN

For the 14th year, we set up stations to share Civil War history with students at the school we know as Calvin Christian. These are always great students—very well behaved, attentive, and great questions. Even the weather was good—no rain! It was a little cool, but the sun was out and the principal helped get the washtubs filled with WARM water! We were pleased to have Michaela Livingstone join us with a presentation on music for the first time—and we hope not the last!



May 27, Red Wing, MN Memorial Day

This was a Memorial Day to remember. There has not been a rainout on this day in 30 years (give or take). Add to this the current flooding of Bay Point Park and you have a low grade crises that began on the Thursday morning prior. Needless to say that Sgt. Daryl, being chairman of the committee, was in crises mode right up to and including the ceremony. The Battery was requested by the police to reduce our charges and use maximum elevation for the ceremony

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

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

held in Central Park. We did so, cutting 8 oz. of powder to 5 oz., but concerns of the charge possibly tumbling during loading added a new twist ---- how to make that charge longer. Our Lt. purchased some oatmeal and added—by volume—an equal amount of oatmeal to the powder charge not knowing what the affect would be.

The ceremony went as well as could be expected under the circumstances. All parties who were scheduled to participate carried out their assigned duties without a hitch. Our gun crew performed the drill as if we were crewing the 10 pdr. and all were employed during the process. Special thanks to James for making last minute changes to bring up his howitzer for this year's ceremony. Submitted by Lt. Cain

