



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 282

October 2020

On This Date-157 Years Ago)

The following is an excerpt from a letter written to the St. Cloud Democrat newspaper, dated October 22, 1863 by Battery member Richard Bloomfield. The Battery was in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Dear DEMOCRAT:

We still hold the key to the Gulf States the Copperhead's wishes to the contrary notwithstanding. The gallant little Army of the Cumberland is not annihilated although it has borne the brunt of the whole Southern Confederacy in the late sanguinary battles before Chattanooga. We fell back to the town on the 22d and now are waiting for an attack in our hastily constructed trenches and earthworks. In falling back we gave up our hospitals and the field of battle, but the rebel hordes from Virginia were so severely punished and cut up that they have a dread of the Western boys and have not molested us since. Sharpshooting, cannonading, at long range, digging trenches, fortifying and speculating on the thousand camp rumors seem the order of the day. Long continued excitement and anxiety has given way to lassitude and an indifference to the flying shot and shell with which we are occasionally complimented by the Conthieveocracy over the way. At first when the booming of the cannon followed by a curl of white smoke away off in front, would startle us, the troops would jump nimbly on the breastworks and look for the effect of the shot, but now, a cannon shot hardly excites remark and the sleeper sleeps on down in the trenches unmindful of anything but "dinner" and "fall in." For the past few nights the camps have been aroused by occasional volleys of musketry at the picket line and front row of breastworks, but beyond a few casualties and the taking of a few dirty, hatless rebels, prisoners, it amounted to nothing.

Next Meeting

October 24, 2020 11:00am

The meeting will be held OUTSIDE at Colvill Park in Red Wing and follow CDC guidance for social distancing. Hopefully, we will be in a picnic shelter. Members must BRING THEIR OWN CHAIRS and should DRESS FOR THE WEATHER! Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items. 651-388-2945.



An Upcoming Event **(That is still on!)**

November 11, Veterans Day, Winona, MN

As of this writing, the committee is still planning to hold this event on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in the park in Winona on the shore of Lake Winona. The theme is the 75th anniversary of the end of WW11. Our gun and crew is invited to participate with honor volleys during the ceremony. This is a special event for us and we are hopeful that it will be able to go on. At present, the event will meet the guidelines for social distancing by being outside with less than 250 people in attendance. However, as we have all learned very well this year, nothing is certain. Members will be updated as we get closer to the event.

Either you all decided this was a terrible idea or—hopefully you just forgot!

Highlight Your Ancestors!

Many of us have ancestors who served in the Civil War and it has been suggested (thank you, Michael R.) that it might be fun to include stories and photos of those ancestors. If you would like to share your Civil War ancestor's story, we will start a column in this newsletter.

Send your story and any photos you might have to Vickie and she will add them to the newsletter in the order received. That is, hoping everyone will participate in this plan!

We all seem to have “extra” time on our hands right now due to many things being canceled because of the virus. This will be a great way to organize those notes on your ancestor, maybe do a little more research, and leave a wonderful story for your descendants.

If you have a photo of your ancestor, include one of you in your period clothing, too. It would be fun to see if there is any “family resemblance!”

Battery Profile

Noah Gates

Noah began his military service as a young man serving aboard the ship *Columbus* on August 25th, 1838. He served this ship just over a month before he switched to the man of war, *Ohio*, and served there until August 3, 1841, when he was discharged from the Navy. His brother, Phineas, served on the *Ohio* with him.

Both brothers were born in Massachusetts, Noah on February 23, 1821, in the town of Windell, Franklin County. They had at least one other sibling, a sister, and she eventually moved to Winona, Minnesota.

After leaving the Navy, Noah went back to Massachusetts and married Sarah Jane Worthen on May 28, 1848. They had a daughter, Emma, before Noah decided to move the family west. The Gates family arrived in Minnesota in March of 1856. Noah took a claim in Section 2 of Fremont Township in Winona County. The 1860 census showed their farm with a real estate value of \$700. The personal estate value was put at \$90. Emma was nine years old and attending school.

Noah was still farming when he decided to enlist in the Second Battery on September 2, 1864. He was 44 years old at the time, had gray eyes, dark hair and a dark complexion. He was 5' 9" tall. He received a bounty of \$100 for enlisting for one year. He served until the Battery was mustered out at the end of the war, a time mostly spent in garrison duty and a few scouting missions rather than any heavy fighting.

A year after returning from the War, Noah and his family left Winona County and headed north to Mille Lacs County, Minnesota. They began farming on land in Germany Township. Noah would have known at least three men in the neighborhood as there were three other men who served in the Battery living in Princeton at the time. Perhaps this may have had something to do with his move north.

In 1880, Noah's health was failing and working the farm was too much for him. They sold their farm and built a "cozy house" in the village of Princeton where he and Sarah lived until his death.

Noah died on August 22, 1883. His obituary in the Princeton newspaper was reprinted in the Winona newspapers as well, and summed up his life.

"Noah Gates was a quiet, unostentatious man. He was never known to lay a straw in anybody's way. He loved his wife and family, his friends and his country, and did not fear death. His word was his bond, and his integrity was unimpeachable. He was a man in every sense of the word. What more need be said?"

Sarah applied for a widow's pension, stating that she believed Noah had died from the chronic diarrhea he first had while serving with the Battery when stationed near Chattanooga, Tennessee. She said he was healthy before he went into the army, and "on account of poor water and exposure while performing his duty as a member of the Battery," his health was broken. Noah was never sent to the hospital for his illness, but Sarah said it had really not ever left him and had gotten worse.

She buried Noah in the Oak Knoll Cemetery in Princeton near the final resting places of three other men who served with Noah in the Second Battery.



Civil War Shopping “Mall”

Submitted by James Livingstone



Civil War Sutlers' Mall

BY BOB ZELLER PRESIDENT, CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Union soldiers who were fortunate enough to serve behind the lines might have enjoyed some of the comforts of home. In the center of this photographed Virginia scene from 1864 or 1865, several dozen soldiers can be seen shopping in sutlers' stores in a covered marketplace. Another group at center-left is engaged in conversation, while 10 men in blue knowingly pose for the photographer. At left, enclosed by a decorative white fence, is a modest whitewashed church, while the building at right carries the sign "Ambrotype and Photographic Gallery." On the hill in the background are some of the best field quarters to be found anywhere during the war: the semi-permanent huts show front doors and windows that opened and closed. Some even have chimneys. But the one 19th-century indignity no soldier could avoid were soggy roads ankle-deep in mud, which they would have here in abundance.

• THE NONPROFIT CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY (CIVILWARPHOTOGRAPHY.ORG) IS DEVOTED TO COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND DIGITIZING CIVIL WAR IMAGES.

Popcorn Balls

There are references to this sweet treat at least as far back as the Civil War. The following is an entry from the Diary of Sarah Morgan, a young woman living in Louisiana during the War.

Sept 21st, 1862

After supper last night, by way of variety Anna, Miriam and I came up to our room, and after undressing, commenced popping corn, and making candy in the fireplace. We had scarcely commenced, when three officers were announced, who found their way to the house to get some supper, they having very little chance of reaching Clinton before morning, as the cars had run off the track. Of course we could not appear; and they brought bad luck with them, for our corn would not pop, and our candy burned, while to add to our distress the odor of broiled chicken and hot biscuits was wafted upstairs, after awhile in the most provoking way. In vain we sent the most pathetic appeals by each servant, for a biscuit apiece, after our hard work. Mrs Carter was obdurate until tired out with messages, she at last sent us an empty jelly cup, a shred of chip beef, two polished drumsticks, and half a biscuit divided in three. With that bountiful repast we were forced to be content, and go to bed.

In the 1860s, popcorn balls were a popular treat bought from street peddlers or "candy boys". Sometimes the balls were dyed red or other colors. Sorghum and corn were two of the few things the south had during the war years.

This is a fun recipe to cook as a group over a fire and kids enjoy making and eating the balls. You can use a mixture of honey and molasses for popcorn balls or experiment and find what you like. You can also use a simple syrup made from sugar. This recipe is from the *Housekeeper's Encyclopedia*, 1861.

POP CORN BALLS.—Boil honey, maple, or other sugar to the great thread; pop corn and stick the corn together in balls with the candy.

The Last Civil War Monitor, the USS Canonicus



Submitted By James
Livingstone

The *Canonicus* was put into service in the summer of 1864 and was armed with two 15" Dahgren smoothbores. She was named after a chief of the Narragansett Indians. The ironclad was 225 feet long with a single turret. This she was used as a river boat and participated in the siege of Petersburg. The photo above was taken at the Jamestown Exposition in April of 1907. The *Canonicus* was the last of the Civil War monitors when she was scrapped in 1908.



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

Ken Cunningham
1170 Golf Ridge Circle
Red Wing, MN 55066 Phone: (651) 388-2945

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: 2mnbattery@gmail.com

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

