



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 327

March 2025

On This Date-160 Years Ago

Remarks for the Month of March, 1865

(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

- 1 Private Wm. Russell detailed at Post Hd. Qrs. S. O. 35 Col Carlin March 1, 1865 as Orderly. Private J. M. Whitlock detailed at Post Hd. Qrs. S. O. 35 Col Carlin March 1, 1865 as Orderly.
- 5 Frank Lewis, Fred Leathers, and Charles Lane detailed in Q. M. Dept. S. O. 47. Maj Church. March 4, 1865.
- 7 L. B. Goodell detailed as Orderly at Hd. Q'rs, Dist. Etowah. Maj Gen. Steedman March 4, 1865 S. O. 27
- 8 Corp. Miles C. Obert, privates J. M. Dinsmore, W. S. Gordon., J. Gutteridge, S. Loudon, I. Martin, J. D. Miles, A. Oleson, W. E. Pulk, H. Peterson, J. P. Jackson, H. W. Towle, J. Staples, H. Wheaton, A. Colburn and Fred Kohlstadt. Ordered to report to Col. Cotter, by order Maj. Church March 8, S. O. 51.
- 11 James A. Hagadorn reported for duty from Furlough, One More Commissioned Officer and fifteen privates detailed on the 9- for duty.
- 13 Sergt. E. A. Whitefield reported for duty
- 18 Lieut. Henry Harder resignation accepted to take effect from the 12th March 1865 per S. F. O. 65. Maj. Gen Thomas.
- 20 Mason, Charles L. returned from detach service
- 22 Carter Fuller reported for duty from Hospt.
- 25 Ferdinand I. Burnham reported for duty
- 26 Carlos Dimick reported for duty
- 27 John M. Silsler reported for duty.
- 28 L. B. Goodell, Wm. Russell, J. M. Whitlock, H. I. Latta, L. Olsen, Wm. S. Wardwell, James Furguson, F. Leathers, F. Lewis and C. Lane reported for duty, Wm. S. Wardwell temporarily on duty A. Q. M. Gar. Arty. Chatt. Tenn by request of Lt. Kinkhead.
- 29 22 non-veterans mustered out of service
- 30 Broke camp 5 o'clock a.m. at Chattanooga, Tenn. and moved by rail enroute to Loudon, Tenn.
- 31 Arrived at Loudon, Tenn. at 2 o'clock a.m. (distance traveled 81 miles) marched from Loudon to north side of Tenn. River (distance one mile) and encamped.

Events for 2025

Check your February minutes that were emailed if you were not at the last meeting to participate in the discussion about the possible events for 2025. We will conclude the discussion and take a final vote on the 2025 calendar at our annual meeting in March.



Dues Are Due!

Have you paid your dues for 2025? If you did, this message is NOT for you!

The membership form is attached to the last page of this newsletter. This is especially important for the elections at our annual meeting this month as we will be voting on organizational and military leadership for the coming terms. Voting eligibility means you are a member in good standing with paid dues.

Send dues to Dary Duden. His address is on the form.

Please do fill in the form on the last page to update your email, phone, or anything else that may have changed. We want to have accurate info to find our members if we need to.



Next Meeting

OR
**March 29, 11:00, Goodhue County
Historical Society 1166 Oak Street, Red Wing**



Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items.
651-388-2945.

Battery Profiles

Gulbrand Toftner

Gulbrand was born in Christiana, Norway, about 1839. On October 4, 1859, he married Hilda Solner in Norway. Their first child, a son they named Gustav, was born on August 4, 1860, but it is not known where as by 1861, the family was living in Winona, Minnesota. Gulbrand was working as a clerk in a store there.

They probably did not come to America alone as Hilda's brother, Emil, arrived in Winona County at about the same time. He was working as a mechanic in Utica, a small community not far from the city of Winona.

Gulbrand and Emil were both mustered into the Second Battery on February 21, 1862. Both were probably recruited by Richard Dawley, a Mexican War veteran who lived in Winona County and brought many men to the unit with his efforts. Dawley was commissioned the Battery's lieutenant one week after Gulbrand and Emil were mustered in.

The Battery went south in May and Gulbrand went with them, though his days in the army were limited. It was Emil who provided the story of what happened to Gulbrand in a letter to the Pension Department.

Emil said he was in camp on the day Gulbrand was assigned to take some of the Battery's horses to the "watering place." It was in late July of 1862 was what Emil thought, though he was not completely sure of the date. Gulbrand was thrown from the horse he was riding and "trodden upon by his said horse" according to Emil. Emil said he was with Gulbrand only a few minutes after the accident and that Gulbrand's right leg near the knee appeared to be the most serious injury, though he suspected later that Gulbrand may have had some internal injuries as well.

Gulbrand was sent to the hospital at Jacinto, Mississippi. Emil visited him there about a week later and said that Gulbrand was "suffering very severely from his injuries." Gulbrand was transferred to the luka Hospital, but as Emil said, he was "never able again to do duty as a soldier."

The disability discharge Gulbrand was given in November of 1862, points to something else having gone on with Gulbrand's health. The discharge said Gulbrand had been in the hospital since June 17th, first in Jacinto, then transferred to luka. The Battery had moved out of the area by September when Gulbrand was moved to the next hospital in Jackson, Tennessee, so Emil did not know about the last move. The discharge does not mention any knee injury, but cites a case of typhoid Gulbrand contracted in September while he was in the luka hospital. It was noted that he was greatly emaciated "resulting from chronic diarrhea", this complicated by typhoid. The discharge does not note why Gulbrand was in the hospital in the first place to even be there to get typhoid, so Emil's word is all that is known.

Gulbrand asked for his mail to be sent to Winona, Minnesota, when he was discharged, but he must not have stayed there long before they went to Chicago. It is known they had friends from Norway living in Chicago and they may have moved there to be near friends.

Gulbrand never recovered enough to work at any job, his illness slowly taking his life. Hilda tried to care for him as best she could, but with one small child and a second one on the way, she had little means. She had no relatives in the U.S. and she spoke "imperfect English" according to one clerk at the Willson and Merriam Law Offices. They were trying to help Hilda get a pension after Gulbrand died at the Hospital of Mercy in Chicago on June 4, 1863. Hilda had sold everything she had trying to care for Gulbrand, even her "household furniture." The office described the situation to the Pension Department and closed by saying, "We are urged by witness of humanity to do all we can in this case."

Mercy Hospital in Chicago was started by Catholic nuns and their mission was to serve those people who were "wounded by contemporary society" and they took in the poor and destitute. Their mission would have fit very well with the Toftner family and was probably the only choice Hilda had for seeking care for Gulbrand.

Hilda gave birth to George on October 5, 1863, four months after Gulbrand died. The Pension Department did agree that Hilda deserved a pension and gave her \$8 a month for herself, \$8 for Gustav and \$2 for George.

After the war was over, her brother, Emil, did not go back to Minnesota, instead he went to Chicago. It is known he was close to Hilda and helped her by filing what he knew of Gulbrand's military service.

Where Hilda had Gulbrand buried is unknown, but very likely a potters field as records lead to the conclusion that she was poor beyond poor. Many records were destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871, so early burial records are difficult, if not impossible, to find.

In His Own Words

The following is a letter that Richard Bloomfield, a soldier of the Second Minnesota Battery during the war, wrote home to a newspaper in his home town of St. Cloud. The *St. Cloud Democrat* published his letters and they are an incredible source of information about what the Battery was doing and at least how one man serving in it saw the progress of the war.

It was published on March 16, 1865.

OUR CHATTANOOGA LETTER. NEWED ACTIVITY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE Important Movements Looked For IMPREGNABILITY OF CHATTANOOGA GUERRILLAS - EXODUS OF CITIZENS THE FUTURE OF TENNESSEE

Items Concerning Minnesota Troops.

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, March 1st, 1865.

EDITOR DEMOCRAT:

I have neglected to inform you lately of matters pertaining to this locality, for the reason that there has been a dearth of news and items which would interest your readers. After the driving of the rebel army from this State by General Thomas, all excitement and interest in this direction subsided and the daily routine of military life gave little to interest the public. Just at this time, however, great activity is apparent in all this Department. Quartermasters and commissaries, always, the first to move, are displaying unwonted activity in their several places and it is safe to assume that important movements are afoot, and that soon troops will be astir, fully armed and rationed. Engineers are busily

engaged in putting the railroads branching in different directions from this place in a good state of repair, and the busy hum in the shops and warehouses sounds ominous. Fatigue parties are still perfecting the different forts and one or two new works are being thrown up for guns of heavy caliber. The old army which drove the rebels out of Tennessee, is lying along the Tennessee River and preparing for any emergency that may arise from movements of rebels in that quarter, or in any other where their presence may be needed.

Late information indicates that a portion of Hood's army has gone to Augusta, Ga., and also that the roving bands of guerillas and scouting cavalymen which have been hovering about northern Georgia and East Tennessee have been ordered to report to the same place. This looks to a combination of forces by the rebels for the purpose of assist General Lee in the shock which will ere long take place between him and Grant and Sherman. Should Lee be forced away from Richmond, it is but reasonable to suppose that he will endeavor to retreat through Virginia into East Tennessee, capture Knoxville and Cumberland Gap, and besiege this place—the key city of the South—before troops could be hurried here for its defense. The great activity noticeable here shows that Old Safety (General Sherman) is wide awake and fully alive to the necessity of guarding every avenue through which Lee could escape and having every outlet well fortified and protected by troops. The descent of Lee is anticipated. He will never occupy this impregnable position and prolong the war a twelvemonth. The same disappointment awaits him, if he comes, that Hood met with in his endeavors last December to winter in Tennessee. No force that he can bring against this place can take it. Enough cannon bristle from the breastworks and forts to sweep every square inch of ground within three or four miles of the place. With the subsistence, ammunition and material which are stored here, and the help which would soon arrive from places north of us, it would be impossible for Lee to unlock this State and be impossible for Lee to unlock this door and march through to the coveted.

The coming year will see the rebels foiled at every point and their armies disorganized, scattered, and either seeking protection within the Federal lines, under the amnesty oath, or forming into roving guerrilla bands, to prey upon the people of their own country and isolated bodies of troops.

The guerilla system inaugurated by the South—fostered and nourished by it—has been and is a curse to the Southern people—a viper that stings and kills friends and foes alike. For fear of lawless men, many of the residents of this portion of the country daily come to this post and request and receive transportation North with their families and household goods. Robbed of their horses, stock, and such products as they have succeeded in getting, they stand in constant danger of their lives, so long as the nation is at war and the country liable to be overrun by armies. They have no encouragement to remain. Those who can, seek to flee the country familiar to them from their birth. A reign of terror exists. Murders committed by guerillas in the surrounding country, are daily reported. Peaceable citizens who come here for provisions from the government are met some ten or twenty miles out and robbed of everything, lucky if they escape with their lives.

Continued on page 4

On the 4th of March the election takes place in this state for Governor, the redoubtable old Parson – W G Brownlow, being nominee of the Union Party. He will be Tennessee's next Governor, and is keenly alive to the necessity of ridding the state of all pestiferous gangs of outlaws. Measures are already afoot among many to organize, and with the countenance of the Governor and the energy and the will he always displays in matters pertaining to his country's welfare, loyal Tennesseans will uproot this terrible system of guerrillaism, which is now desolating the fairest portion of the state and driving the bone and sinew from their native soil to the North. Tennessee is suffering, and Ohio, Indiana and Illinois and gaining her thrifty, hard working farmers.

Yet this exodus will in future years be largely made up for from the energetic and progressive people of the North who will migrate to this section. This state has great mineral and agricultural wealth, which if properly developed will redound largely to the wealth of the people and benefit of the State. Coal and iron exist in large quantities in this section, and the richness of the lands in the valleys of Tennessee are well known. With the institution of slavery in her midst, she followed her sister States With the blessings of freedom, she will lead the van as one of the wealthiest internal States in the Union. Many men already see her destined future importance and are hastening to take advantage of it. Even for this immediate locality I am informed that there are now two hundred applications on file in the office of the post commandant from Northern men to engage in business pursuits in this town. Many discharged officers and soldiers remain here and are buying up lands and engaging in pursuits mercantile and agricultural. The government gives discharged soldiers the first chance, then loyal residents and then men from the North. Chattanooga, from its great central position, is destined to be a large city. Bishop Otey, of Memphis, one of Tennessee's prominent men, asserted it would be second to no city in the State.

The Government still continues in the work of erecting warehouses and other necessary buildings needed for its wants. There are fifteen large steam saw mills, some with shingle machines attached, kept constantly at work in sawing lumber from logs brought down the Tennessee River. The timber is mostly white wood, poplar, oak and some pine. Notwithstanding these facilities, it is almost impossible to keep up the supply demanded. Barracks are being erected for the infantry, a vast improvement on the miserable little huts they have been obliged to live in during the winter. Lieutenant Alex Kinhead, the enterprising quartermaster of the Garrison artillery, is also alive to the importance of proper buildings for the artillerymen whose wants he caters to. He has organized and equipped a lumbering crew from the artillerymen, of one officer and a hundred men, who are now engaged in procuring timber one hundred and fifty miles up the Tennessee. This crew is miles up the Tennessee. This crew is composed largely of Minnesotans who have lumbered in the pineries of our own beautiful State, and are from their experience good and valuable men in this business.

There are at this place quite a number of Minnesota troops. There being no less than five batteries: 3d Minnesota Light Artillery, and Batteries A, B, C, and D, Heavy Artillery. Battery E is also expected at this place. The Captain of the 2d Minn. Battery, whose commission expires by limitation this month, will likely be mustered out, as also thirty-five men whose term of service will expire. Some eighty odd men will go out next September, leaving the "Old Second" with but a corporal's guard of "Veterans" to see the rebellion out.

Lieutenant Ayer, of the 2d Minnesota Battery, has been appointed Ordnance officer of this Post, and is on the staff of Colonel Carleton, the Post commandant. Captain Sterry, of Battery A. is absent on leave. Captain Ljyde, of Co. B., has resigned. Battery D. has been temporarily placed in Fort Phelps, named in honor of Colonel Phelps, 38th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, who was killed in the assault on Mission Ridge. This Fort is a detached one, half a mite from town, on the Roseville road. It was partly built by the rebels and finished by the Union troops when they occupied this place in 1863.

We have three colored regiments here, the 14th, 16th and 42d. The later is an engineer regiment, and is commanded by a Minnesotan, Colonel Putnam, formerly of the 2d Regt They are all in a good state of efficiency and drill and fully up to the white regiments in tactics. On pleasant days hundreds of soldiers and civilians wend their way to the camps of the colored troops to witness them at dress parade.

The winter just past has been unusually severe, with heavy continuous rains. Lately it has been warm and pleasant, and farmers and gardeners are very busy plowing and planting.

DIXIE (Richard Broomfield)

A Daily Dose of Hardtack

From A Daily Dose of History Facebook page.

Keeping fed armies on the march or sailors on long journeys has always been challenging. For a couple thousand years, one of the primary ways it was done was with something that came to be called “hardtack.”

Baking bread while aboard a ship or on a military campaign was impractical if not impossible. The solution was to come up with a type of bread that would not rot, and thus hardtack was born.

Hardtack (which derived its name from “tack”, a slang word for food used by British sailors) is made from salt, water, and wheat flour, repeatedly baked until absolutely dehydrated. The resulting product is as hard as a rock but will keep indefinitely. First mass-produced by the British navy in the 17th century, “hardtack” cakes and crackers are known to have been used for food by ancient Egyptian sailors, by Roman legions, and by Crusaders. Hardtack crackers were a principal food source for both armies during the American Civil War, some of it being leftovers from the Mexican War thirteen years earlier.

To make the hardtack edible it was necessary to soak it in water or coffee, or to fry it in fat. Soaking the hardtack not only softened it, but also forced out the weevils and worms that often infested it (causing soldiers to often refer to hardtack as “worm castles”).

Another “recipe” favored more by Southern soldiers was for making “cush.” To make it, soldiers put hardtack into a cup or on a plate so they could crush it into crumbs. This was not done by hand! Reports suggest the butt of a musket or bayonet was the tool most often employed. Once the hardtack was crushed, bacon grease was poured over the crumbs and allowed to cool. When cold enough, it was rolled into balls that could be carried in haversacks and eaten on the march.

By the time of World War I, food storage technology had improved enough that hardtack rations were no longer necessary, though there was still hardtack eaten in the trenches. The soldiers and sailors of the past would look with envy upon today’s MRE’s.

Of course, it wasn’t only soldiers and sailors who ate hardtack. It was also commonly taken along as a food source on long overland journeys and is still commercially available today.

The images are photographs of hardtack. The piece on the top is a hardtack “ship biscuit” dated to 1856 and now displayed at the Maritime Museum of Denmark. The photo beneath it is of hardtack from the American Civil War, displayed at the Varnum House Museum in Rhode Island.



A Little Laundry History

Everyone has seen the tubs and boilers hauled around by the laundress, but have you paid attention to the little bottle of blue balls she carries? That is bluing and not something often used today.

Or is it?

Bluing is the practice of dyeing fabrics so they appear new and bright. Since blue and yellow are complimentary colors in the subtractive color model of color perception, adding a trace of blue to the off white color, makes it appear whiter. White, off white, and even colored laundry often becomes yellowed or dingy and grey because of wear and use. Even new, "white" is seldom white unless it is heavily bleached. The whitest cotton and whitest sheep still produce a fabric that is slightly yellow, cream, or gray. Dyeing fabrics with a hint of blue gives whites the brilliant white that is highly desired and looks "clean".

People used "bluing" to "brighten" everything from their hair to their aprons. The popular products contained a fugitive blue dye added to the final rinse water. Laundry bluing came from several sources as technology progressed. Some of the earliest bluing was made with indigo and starch, called "stone blue." Ultramarine was a deep blue pigment which was originally made by grinding lapis lazuli into a powder. Its lengthy grinding and washing process made the natural pigment quite valuable—roughly ten times more expensive than the stone it came from and it was expensive as gold. Once chemical dyes were invented, a synthetic version of ultramarine made it much more affordable. Another common bluing was made of a colloid of ferric ferrocyanide, blue iron salt, also referred to as "Prussian blue" in water. Commercial bluing was manufactured by many companies under a variety of brands and still is available today.

Unfortunately, bluing washed out rather quickly, so the next laundry day included bluing in the final rinse again and again.

People dyed quilt linings with bluing to obtain a pale blue back that didn't show the dirt---a practical solution until washing the quilt

Modern fluorescent optical brightener is added to modern laundry detergent, which makes colors appear brighter or more brilliant. Optical brighteners, optical brightening agents (OBAs), fluorescent brightening agents (FBAs), or fluorescent whitening agents are chemical compounds that absorb light in the ultraviolet and violet region of the electromagnetic spectrum, and re-emit light in the blue region through the phenomenon of fluorescence. These additives are often used to enhance the appearance of color in fabric and paper, causing a "whitening" effect; they make intrinsically yellow/orange materials look less so. That is why white clothing glows in the presence of black light.

Don't think we very commonly use bluing today? Look at your laundry detergent. Notice how many laundry soaps are blue? Covering up the yellowed or grayed look is why! The same idea applies to toning grey/silver hair with purple/blue shampoos.



Next time you see the laundry tubs, look for that little jar of blue balls. Now you know what they are!

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>

Your Country Needs You!

And so does the Battery!

2025 dues are DUE!! To remain on the active 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 send this form and your check to:

Daryl Duden
1210 West 4th Street
Red Wing, MN 55066

PLEASE fill out this form to be sure we have the most accurate contact info for members, especially if you have changed addresses, emails, phones, etc.