



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 175

April 2010

Upcoming Events

May 1-2 Reenactment at Mantorville, MN

This 3-day event is to be held at the Riverside Park in Historic Mantorville, MN, on the banks of the Zumbro River. It includes a muster or recruitment and preparation, camp and skirmish reenactments, and living history demonstrations Friday is an educational day for local school children with Saturday and Sunday open to the public. Entertainment, food, and sutlers (period vendors) are available.

We will arrive on Friday night to set up camp and be ready for Saturday morning. Please let John Cain know if you are planning to attend for meal planning purposes.



FACEBOOK

The Battery’s Facebook page is running and currently has 74 fans! It would appear people are watching the page and spreading the word about it.

SECOND BATTERY MEMBERS: Please provide some feedback on what has been posted to the Facebook page! As the default administrator of the page, I’d like to know what you want to see there. Click the “LIKE” button on the things you want to see more of. Ask questions about the postings if you think there might be more to the story. Comment, let me know what you think. That will help me know what sort of things to post there.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Second-Minnesota-Battery-of-Light-Artillery-Reenactors/371220336239?ref=nf>

March Elections

Corporate Officers:

- President — John Cain
- Vice President — Neil Bruce
- Secretary — John Watkins
- Treasurer — Daryl Duden

Military Leadership:

- Lieutenant — John Cain
- Quartermaster Sergeant — Jim Rosasco
- Sergeant — Daryl Duden
- Corporal — Neil Bruce
- Corporal — Jay Overby

Thanks to all who made the extra effort to attend the meeting and insure a solid quorum.

Next Meeting

To Be Announced. Watch your email or contact John Cain (651) 388-9250.



Southern Gunboat Quilts

Adapted from the web page: http://www.patternsfromhistory.com/civil_war/gunboat_quilts.htm

The cause is a noble one, the effort is sublime, and the moral effect will reach far beyond the deadly projectiles which the contemplated gunboat can send. If the women take it up with a will, there is no word as fail. From the Mobile Register & Advertiser, 1862.

By 1862, it was obvious that the South direly needed more gunboats costing about \$80,000 each. Southern women raised enough money to buy three of these ships during that year. These were sometimes jokingly referred to as "petticoat gunboats" having been bought by the earnings of women.



Pictured to the left is the CSS Fredericksburg, an ironclad gunboat. Various fundraising efforts raised money for gunboats like this one. Elegant quilts made by Confederate women were auctioned and raffled off to help build this and two other boats.

As the war progressed, these boats were less effective due to the Union blockade of southern ports, so women turned to earning money for soldier's hospitals and other more urgent needs.

How they were made

Because the objects on these quilts were made by cutting out flowers and other motifs from large prints on chintz fabrics, each quilts was unique. The word, "chintz" is a description of fabric printed with very large patterns, usually of flowers or fruits. Many chintzes had vases or wreaths incorporated with their floral designs. Chintzes were usually more expensive because of the extra effort it took to print them. Some early chintzes were actually

printed by hand with large blocks. Today's word, "chintzy" meaning cheap or cutting corners to save money, is derived from how the chintzes were used. By cutting out the individual flowers, wreaths, or vases and appliquéing them onto a larger plain fabric, a small piece of chintz fabric could be made to decorate several quilts. It quite literally "cut corners" to save money and make the expensive fabric stretch further.

Today's quilter can use the fusible fabrics to line her chintzes and simply iron them down rather than sewing, but is that accurate? Hardily, but it may not be as far off as one might think. It seems that paste was sometimes used to adhere the floral motifs

to the background fabric before stitching each of them down.

The technique of cutting out a shape from a fabric and sewing it to another without seams or stitching showing is called "broderie perse." Perhaps some of these quilts were done by fine needle turn appliqué, but in many, the maker had whip stitched the raw edges down with stitches so fine a magnifying glass is needed to see them.

These types of gunboat quilts could be made on a single square of fabric or done in sections. Sections are probably easier to handle for hand appliqué as you work with smaller pieces and only assemble them when most of the fine hand works is complete.



Battery Profile

Sidney Norris

I, Sidney G. Norris of the Town of St. Francis, County of Anoka and State of Minnesota, being of sound mind and memory and considering the uncertainty of this frail and transitory life, do therefore make, ordain, publish, and declare this to be my last Will and Testament:

Sidney was writing this after he had joined the Second Battery, but before he went south to join them in the field. He was one of the recruits brought by Lieutenant Woodbury from his recruiting mission in the last summer of 1862. Sidney probably knew the lieutenant as well as many of the other men who were joined from the Anoka County area at the time.

After making sure any debts he might leave were paid, Sidney wanted everything he owned to go to his wife, Sarah. It was a simple will, dated September 1, 1862. Sidney was at Fort Snelling after mustering into the Battery on August 9th. Sidney and Sarah had been married on March 10, 1855, in Oxford, Maine. They came to Anoka County together and took up farming on a piece of land in Oak Grove Township, just a little south of the town of St. Francis.

Sidney was 42 years old, with blue eyes, dark hair, and a dark complexion. He stood 5' 8-1/2" tall. His birthplace was in Livermore, Maine.

The time Sidney spent in the Battery was as a private.

On November 4, 1863, he was sent to the hospital in Chattanooga where he remained for quite some time. Again in April of 1865, he was sent to the hospital and returned to duty on June 1. Six weeks later, Sidney was back in the hospital at Knoxville, Tennessee. By the 22nd of July, he was transferred and admitted to the General Army Hospital No. 1 in Chattanooga, where he died from dysentery on July 25, 1865. He was buried that same day in the Chattanooga National Cemetery and his effects turned over to a council of administration to be held until returned to his family.

Sidney didn't leave much. At the time of his death, the personal possessions he had with him were two blankets, a greatcoat, rubber blanket, blouse, vest, pants, drawers, hat, shoes, and a silver watch.

Back in Oak Grove, Sarah inherited the remainder of his worldly goods. She received 80 acres of land with a value of \$50, two cows, a two year old steer, a calf, a pig, some household goods and wearing apparel, and \$350 in cash. The total value of the estate was \$592.

Why Sidney wrote his will out just before he left Minnesota for the war is unknown. He may have had a premonition that he would never be back, it may have simply been a coincidence. Whatever the reason, he did leave his wife cared for and a glimpse into his life for the generations following him.

Schedule of Real and Personal property belonging to the estate of the late Sidney G. Norris at the time of his death via the 1/2 of the 1/2 of the 1/2 of the N.E. 1/4 and the 1/2 of the 1/2 of the N.E. 1/4 of section 35, Town 34 Range 25, containing 80 acres, Personal property

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| lumber valued at | \$ 3000 |
| 2 Cows \$25 each | " 5000 |
| 1 two year old Steer | " 1500 |
| 1 calf | " 400 |
| 1 Pig | " 300 |
| Household furniture | 100.00 |
| Wearing Apparel | 20.00 |
| Cash | 350.00 |
| | 592.00 |

A page of Sydney Norris' probate record.

2010 Calendar

As passed at our March meeting

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| May 1-2 | Reenactment at Mantorville, MN |
| May 5 | Bluffview Elementary—Lake City, MN |
| May 14 | Eagle Point Elementary — Oakdale, MN |
| May 17 | Calvin Christian School — Edina, MN |
| May 27 | Oakdale Elementary — Oakdale, MN |
| May 31 | Memorial Day — Red Wing, MN |
| June 12 | Encampment in Woodbury Park — St. Francis, MN |
| June 19-20 | Reenactment at Adams, MN |
| June 26-27 | Reenactment at Franklin Grove, Illinois |
| July 10-11 | Reenactment at Seminole Valley Farm Museum, Cedar Rapids, Iowa |
| August 7-8 | Reenactment at Boscobel, WI |
| August 14-15 | Reenactment at Pipestone, MN |
| August 28-29 | Encampment and demos at Ahlman's—Morristown, MN |
| September 11 | Encampment at Anderson Center—Red Wing, MN |
| September 25-26 | Reenactment at Wade House—Greenbush, WI |
| November 11-14 | National Reenactment at Collierville, TN |

Recap

Civil War Symposium in Boscobel, March 26-28

Unfortunately, registration for the classes offered were low and the organizers decided to cancel the event.

Miss Becky, Miss Mandy, Mrs. Overby, and Mrs. Wendel were all planning to attend, had the time off from work, and were quite disappointed. So, they decided to make their own fun. They drove the river road

***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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looking for eagles, flocks of pelicans, quilt shops, antique shops, and Hobby Lobbys from Minneapolis to LaCrosse, then to Rochester and finally home. Besides doing lots of laughing and talking, the ladies found some great Civil War era repro quilt fabrics and even a pattern called "Sherman's March."

The organizers of the symposium are planning to try it again next year. Keep it in mind to attend as these have been very good in the past.

