

Circular No. 181

November 2010

On This Date-150 Years Ago
A President-Elect

The politics of 1860 were—it hardly seems possible—even more divided than current day! Parties were splitting, mostly along sectional lines, the very thing George Washington warned against in his farewell address as he left the presidency.

On election Day of 1860, there were four candidates in four major parties:

- Stephen Douglas, Democratic Party
- Abraham Lincoln, Republican Party
- John Breckinridge, Southern Democratic Party
- John Bell, Constitutional Union Party

Breckinridge carried every Southern state, Maryland, and Delaware, but because of population centers, he had only had 18.1% of the total popular vote nationwide.

Bell's Constitution Party carried only three states and all were border states, Virginia (includes West Virginia at this time) Tennessee, and Kentucky, for 12.6% of the national vote.

Stephen Douglas carried only one state, Missouri, but he received enough votes overall to put his in second place with 29.5% of the total vote.

Lincoln carried every state north of the Mason-Dixon line (except Maryland), but it only got him 39.9% of the total vote. Lincoln's election was hardly a ringing endorsement for him to take the office of president!

In Minnesota, there were 34,804 votes cast. 22,069 of them were for Lincoln—63.4% of the total Minnesota vote. Douglas got 11,920 votes (34.2%), Breckinridge got 748 votes, and Bell got only 50 votes in Minnesota.

The vote totals show how divided politics were even in our far northern state. When South Carolina seceded (December 1860), wild rumors were spread about tiny Manomin County (today's southern Anoka County) planning to secede and annex itself to South Carolina! It was said those votes for Bell all originated in Manomin County and records do show it was one of the counties Lincoln did not win.

BTW, Lincoln gave NO speeches during the campaign—he let the Republican Party do the campaigning for him!

Upcoming Events
December 11, 10:30-1:30

Christmas at the Library

We will set up a tent (inside) and some tables of display items/activities for patrons of the library for an hour before and an hour after Mrs. Wendel's Christmas History Lyceum at the Rum River Library in Anoka. Those who live in the metro area are encouraged to attend if possible as this is a paid event. Please contact Mrs. Wendel (763-754-2476) if you can attend and coordinate what we will present for this event.

The library is located at 4201 6th Avenue N. in Anoka.



December 11, 6:00 p.m. Christmas Dinner
Norton's in Red Wing

This outing was organized via email in August, so if you did not hear about it, contact Private Ron Graves. (rgroland@hbc.com or 651-565-4484)

We have 28 people signed up, so we will be ordering off the menu and keeping individual tabs. Should the number change, we may need to revise what Norton's is able to do for us. Again, should your attendance status change, notify Private Graves ASAP.

The uniform of the day is uniforms or 1860s civilian attire for gentlemen, hoops or 1860s dresses for ladies. (Modern clothing is also acceptable, though period attire is encouraged.)

We are hoping to have a photographer there for group and individual "portraits."

Next Meeting

December 11 6:00 p.m.
Norton's
307 Main Street, Red Wing
Call Ron Graves for more info. 651-565-4484



Battery Profile

Henry Peterson

Many Norwegian immigrants had trouble with the spellings and pronunciations of their names when they arrived in the United States. It led to misspellings or even wrong names on official documents and often to the “Americanizing” of their names. Language barriers may have contributed to the confusion in their names. Henry is one of those immigrants with name issues. His name went from Henry Peterson on the 1857 census to Hendirck Petterson on pension applications with various changes along the way. His own signature adds another question about his name. On his enlistment papers, he signed his name as “Henry Peterson Buh.” It is the only place his name appears like this and it is the only known signature Henry left.

Born in Norway, Henry had made it to Minnesota in time for the 1857 territorial census. He was 24 years old and living in Dakota County in a household of 11 people. Henry is the only one with the surname Peterson, the others appear to be two different families. The ages of the parents in the Abrahamson and Newson families make it possible they were sisters or cousins of Henry as they are similar. All but the youngest in the families were born in Norway; the two “fathers” were naturalized citizens. The men were all listed as farmers.

The next bit of the story Henry left was when he enlisted in the Second Battery. He was living in Eureka, in Dakota County and working on a farm when he went to Faribault to enlist on August 26, 1864. He allowed his name to be credited to the town of Wheeling for the draft, but it appears he had no connections there. Henry was 31 years and 10 months old, stood 5’ 7” tall, with gray eyes, light hair, and a light complexion. He was single. He was entitled to a bounty of \$100 for his promise to serve one year in the army.

No special remarks were made about Henry other than he was sent on a detail to Major Church to help cut logs for the garrison in March of 1865. Henry served a few days less than his full year, being discharged at the end of the war on August 16, 1865.

One of his neighbors said when Henry came home from the Army, he stayed with them for a few

weeks. They said Henry suffered a lot with diarrhea and “he looked like a mere skeleton. He could not at any time accomplish more than a half a days work and consequently became very poor and, and could not hold his place, and had to move west.”

By this time, Henry had married Karen Maria Andreasdatter Johnson. They were married at the Christiana Church in Dakota County on October 14, 1866.

When Henry decided to move west, he went to Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, and took up farming once again. By 1880, Henry and Karen had nine children ranging in age from 12 years to two months. Karen’s mother was also living with them.

Karen died just after Christmas in 1899. Henry followed her in death on December 14, 1901. He was buried in the Free Lutheran Church Cemetery in Willmar.

Henry left two children under the age of 16 when he died; neither of their names are listed on the 1880 census, so it is possible Henry and Karen had more children than the nine known about. Laurentius was born in 1889 and Fred was born in 1892. They were taken in by Anton Peter Peterson. It is unknown if Anton was related to Henry or simply another Norwegian immigrant with name trouble.



A Tree for Artillerists!

Submitted by Miss Mandy Wendel

On my first visit to the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden just north of Hilo, Hawaii in August, I found a rather unremarkable tree named a Cannonball Tree. As it had no flowers, no fruit, nuts, or seeds to note and even few leaves, I didn't pay it much mind other than the name.

On a return visit, which happened to be the day of the October Battery meeting when I was wearing my Battery shirt, I discovered not only was the tree blooming, but it was an incredible bloom that was beautiful!

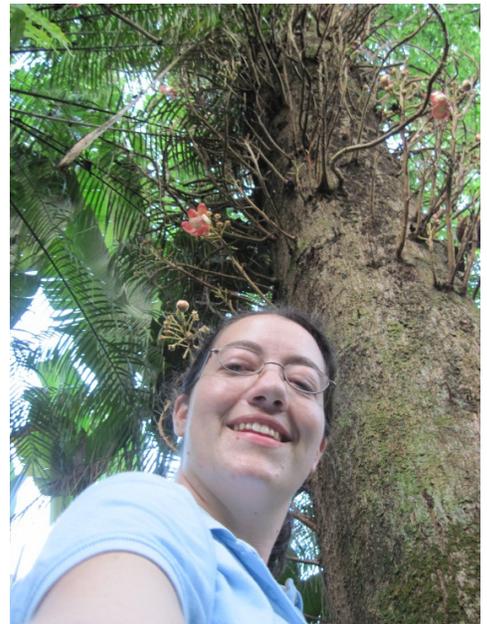
The flowers range from Artillery Red to the same shade of pink as the Sergeant's faded artillery stripes and are about the size of a tennis ball. Yes, all those different colors are on the same tree.

I also discovered why it has the name it does. The seed it produces is the size and appearance of something me might load into a gun or a mortar!



It is slightly smaller than a BASKETBALL!! In researching this tree a little further, I discovered that the cannonball is filled with a pulp that is—get this—**Union Blue!**

The tree is in the same family as the Brazil Nut Tree and originally from South America. It is a little odd in the fact that the flowers and fruit don't sprout on the end of branches, but from the trunk itself giving it an appearance somewhat like



a giant stand of grape when there are several fruits at once.

As there were no places to put a camera or tripod, the attempt to get a picture of me in our Battery shirt under the Cannonball Tree yielded an interesting picture.

(Watch next month's *Action Front* for more unusual Civil War history Miss Mandy uncovered in her faaaaaaar western home!)

DOUGLAS & SHERWOOD'S NEW EXPANSION SKIRT.

WITH THE PATENT ADJUSTABLE BUSTLE.

SEVERAL reasons why these skirts are superior to all others:

1st. The steel springs are of unequalled temper and flexibility; they can be wound around the finger like a piece of tape, and will immediately resume their place upon being dropped.

2d. The covering for the springs is made of the finest lace yarn.

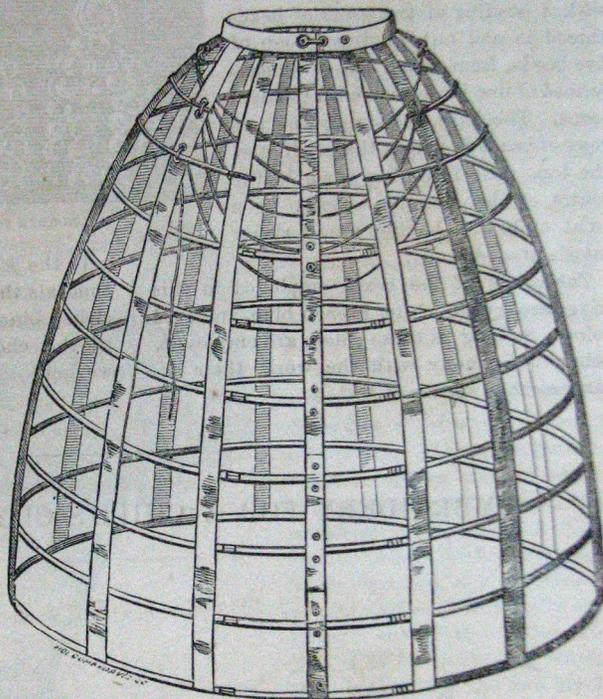
3d. The expansive property is a *reality*, the springs being joined by silvered slides, which prevent the ends from crossing, or sticking out, as they do when the common India-rubber straps are used.

4th. The expansion is all in front, so that the wearer can contract or expand the skirt, without disrobing, at pleasure.

5th. The style of finish surpasses anything ever produced, either in this country or Europe. The eyelets, slides, hooks, and fastenings (all silvered), add greatly to their beauty as well as usefulness.

6th. Their *lightness* recommends them, weighing, as they do, but twelve ounces each.

7th. The "PATENT ADJUSTABLE BUSTLE" (of which D. & S. are the sole owners), without which no skirt is perfect, gives them a decided



advantage over the common "Extension" skirts. The corset laces go on the *back* of the person. The size of the bustle may be increased to any extent desired by drawing the laces tighter.

Orders can be filled for them.

1859 Advertising

Our foremothers were no different than ladies of today! Their magazines were filled with stories, recipes, self-help guides, patterns, and of course, advertising!

This ad was written like an article, but touts the advantages of the Douglas and Sherwood hoop. It is a cage crinoline as opposed to the cased hoops we buy from sutlers today.

An interesting feature noted is that this hoop could be adjusted in size while the wearer was still in it.

This would indicate your hoop did not stay the same size for all occasions! It is an interesting tidbit your editor has never heard before and brings up all kinds of questions.

Makes a lady wonder...

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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In Other News

With no events in October, there is no Recap, but a decision made about an Upcoming Event needs explanation. The Battery's annual calendar included a national event in Collierville, Tennessee, for November and plans were well underway for a group to attend this event.

Those plans were changed and the group planning to attend has voted to NOT participate in this event. It seems there were two events planned in that same area on the same weekend. Note the qualifiers in these statements—nothing is terribly clear about how this all came about. What was anticipated the Battery would attend seems to have been incorporated into the other event, called Twin Rivers. That event morphed and was very different than the national event we were anticipating.

At last contact, there were less than 2,000 reenactors registered for it, whatever and wherever it is. Tennessee, now northern Mississippi, is a long way to go for an event not much bigger than Boscobel in terms of reenactors. Those on the list to attend were very disappointed—and are probably still confused. Certainly your editor is!