



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 197

April 2012

On This Date-150 Years Ago

April, 1862

While there were no morning reports filed for April of 1862 for the Battery, there were entries made in the “Battery Returns.” The single entry for April reads:

Left Ft. Snelling, Minn. Apr 21/62 in obedience to orders from Maj. General Halleck Comdg. Dept. of the Miss. Travelling by steam boat to St. Louis, Mo. Arrived at this post Apr. 25/62. Distance traveled 800 miles.

George Murphie, a private in the Battery wrote a letter to his father describing the trip down river.

Dear Father,

We left St. Paul about four o'clock after leaving the Fort, and arrived at St. Louis the next Friday morning about sunrise and started immediately for this camp or barracks, which we reached about noon. We had as pleasant a passage down as could be expected with some 800 passengers. At all the towns on the river the people flocked to the banks as we passed, or stopped for a few minutes while our band struck up Hail Columbia, or Yankee Doodle, and cheer after cheer greeted us on landing and leaving. We met with no accident, except being blown ashore at Nauvoo, where we lay until morning. This life is new and exciting. We have drilled but little since coming here. Have received our horses 115 and 18 mules. Expect to get our cannon and the remainder of our outfit this week. We have just received orders to hold ourselves in readiness to go to Pittsburg Landing. It is thought we shall leave about Monday next, in five days.

This is the last known letter George wrote before his death on June 27, 1862, from typhoid. He is buried in the National Cemetery at Corinth, MS.

Next Meeting

April 22, 2:00 p.m.

Home of John and Elizabeth Watkins
3508 Yates Ave. N, Crystal, MN



Upcoming Events

March 29-April 1 National at Shiloh, Tennessee

Those attending this event are coordinated and ready to go!

April 7, Oakland Cemetery Dedication, St. Paul

This is the first official event sponsored by the 150th Civil War Commemoration Task Force as appointed by the governor. Our gun will be firing three honor volleys during the event. **Arrive by 10:00** to get the gun unloaded and prepared for the ceremony at 11:00.

Ladies are encouraged to attend in their very best hoops and finery!

There are two Second Battery men buried in this cemetery, Benjamin Joy and Edward Tillotson. Neither had a tombstone until we found them and provided the needed paperwork to the cemetery to order them a marker.

Oakland Cemetery is located at 927 Jackson St. in St. Paul. From either north or south 35E, exit on Pennsylvania Ave. and go west to Jackson St. Turn right on Jackson and follow to the cemetery. Follow markers to the Soldier's Rest area of the cemetery. The event will be held rain or shine.

April 28-29, Keokuk, Iowa

Too soon after Shiloh, no gun crew! We will not be attending this event this year.

Elections Results

The elections were held at the March meeting and the following were elected:

Corporate officers:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| President | John Cain |
| Vice President/Secretary | John Watkins |
| Treasurer | Daryl Duden |
| Newsletter/Historian | Vickie Wendel |

Military Officers:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Lieutenant | John Cain |
| Quartermaster Sergeant | Keith Stinson |
| Sergeant | Daryl Duden |
| Corporal | Neil Bruce |
| Corporal | Jay Overby |
| Corporal | John Watkins |

Battery Profile

Benjamin P. Joy

When Benjamin was mustered into the Second Minnesota Battery on September 2, 1864, he knew he would not be joining a unit where he would be alone. His brother, Horatio, had already been serving in the Battery for over two years.

Benjamin was the little brother, being not only three years younger than Horatio, but standing 5' 9" tall, put him more than two inches shorter. His birth was on April 5, 1838, in Racine, Wisconsin, his family being one of the pioneers to that area. Benjamin had blue eyes, brown hair, a sandy complexion and was working as a farmer when he enlisted.

The draft quota often assigned men to places that were short and this is what happened to Benjamin. He was living in Spring Grove in Houston County when he went to Rochester to enlist, but agreed to have his enlistment count toward the draft quota for Utica in Winona County. He received the first third of his bounty payment, a bounty which would eventually total \$100.

The time Benjamin spent in the Battery was uneventful, the only special notation was that he joined the Battery's Bible Class and attended until June of 1865. Benjamin was with a detachment of men that were riding in freight cars between Knoxville and Philadelphia, Tennessee. The train cars derailed and the men riding in and on top of them were thrown or jumped from the cars. In the confusion, Benjamin injured his left ankle enough to require him to use crutches to walk. Captain Hotchkiss supplied the crutches and stated that Benjamin was unable to return to duty after that and was still using the crutches when the Battery was mustered out in August at Fort Snelling.

Benjamin went back to Spring Grove, but did not stay there. He moved to Fremont in Winona County where he remained until 1875. From there, he moved into the city of Winona for a time and spent at least some time working in a logging camp in Wisconsin. In January of 1877, Benjamin was scaling a pine log when a skid flew around and struck him in the head just behind his right ear. It caused the loss of all hearing in his right ear, left a constant "roaring" and "spells of dizziness".

Benjamin cited his ankle and the injury from the logging accident when he applied for a pension in 1892.

By this time, Benjamin was living in St. Paul. He left St. Paul in 1899 and moved west to Lyon County, Minnesota, where he remained until 1912 when he moved back to the Soldiers Home in Minneapolis.

It was his last move. Benjamin died on December 1, 1912, and was laid to rest in St. Paul's Oakland Cemetery. His grave was not marked until 2002 when it was brought to the attention of the Cemetery Association and the Twin Cities Civil War Round Table. A veteran's stone was ordered and placed for Benjamin.



Tentative 2012 Schedule

March 29 – April 1 - Shiloh, Tennessee
April 7 – Dedication at Oakland Cemetery in St. Paul.
April 28-29 – Keokuk, IA—NOT ATTENDING AS A UNIT
May TBD — Bluffview, School
May 7 — Calvin Christian, Edina
May 11—Eagle Point, Oakdale
May 24 — Oakdale Elem, Oakdale
May 28 — Memorial Day event in Red Wing, Battery I may join us for section firing.
June 9th – Rum River Library event
August 4-5 – Boscobel, WI
August 11-12 – Pipestone, MN
August 25-26 – Ahlman's, Morristown, MN
September 15 – Anderson Center, Red Wing, MN
October 5-7, Perryville, KY (with Battery I as a section)
November 11 — Veteran's Day event in Winona, MN (weather permitting)
December TBD — Christmas at the Library

This calendar is not yet official as there was no vote taken at the March meeting. The vote on the calendar will take place at the April meeting.

Some of the major events of April 1862

April 6-7, 1862 -- The Battle of Shiloh.

On April 6, Confederate forces attacked Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant at Shiloh, Tennessee. By the end of the day, the federal troops were almost defeated. Yet, during the night, reinforcements arrived, and by the next morning the Union commanded the field. When Confederate forces retreated, the exhausted federal forces did not follow. Casualties were heavy - 13,000 out of 63,000 Union soldiers died, and 11,000 of 40,000 Confederate troops were killed.

Fort Pulaski, Georgia -- April 10-11, 1862

General Quincy A. Gillmore battered Fort Pulaski, the imposing masonry structure near the mouth of the Savannah River, into submission in less than two days. His work was promptly recorded by the indefatigable Timothy H. O'Sullivan.

April 1862 -- New Orleans.

Flag Officer David Farragut led an assault up the Mississippi River. By April 25, he was in command of New Orleans.

April 1862 -- The Peninsular Campaign.

In April, General McClellan's troops left northern Virginia to begin the Peninsular Campaign. By May 4, they occupied Yorktown, Virginia. At Williamsburg, Confederate forces prevented McClellan from meeting the main part of the Confederate army, and McClellan halted his troops, awaiting reinforcements.

Recap

Shiloh, Tennessee

Eight members traveled to Tennessee for the 150th Anniversary event. The first stop was the National Park where we found Dennis Rose, the only Minnesota man buried in the Shiloh National Cemetery. Bugler Bill got permission to blow Taps over his grave! We drove through the park and then settled into our camp at the Shiloh event only a few miles away.



Of course, it rained on Friday, turning the Tennessee clay roads at the event site into giant mud pits. The rain on Saturday missed us and by Sunday, most of the mud was dried up and we got out okay!



There was no artillery involvement on Friday, giving members ample time to explore Sutler City and spend money. The dawn battle on Saturday was INCREDIBLE! The smoke and fog was so thick, the Rebs didn't know our guns were there until we fired—and it gave them a real dose of authenticity!! The Saturday afternoon battle was a mixed up affair with our guns not in the Hornets Nest and firing cut short by communication snafus.



Sunday made up for it with a spectacular battle! A full 45 minutes of artillery preceded the infantry charge that moved up



in waves through the artillery line and onto the field! Awesome was the only word for it! See the Battery's Facebook page for LOTS more photos!! <https://www.facebook.com/#!/media/set/?set=a.10150763541156240.458868.371220336239&type=1>



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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