

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 231

October-November-December 2015

On This Date-150 Years Ago

November 1865:

The CSS Shenandoah was commissioned as a commerce raider by the Confederacy to interfere with Union shipping. It began as a Scottish-built merchant ship originally called the Sea King. It was secretly purchased by Confederate agents in September 1864. Captain James Waddell renamed the ship Shenandoah after she was converted to a warship off the coast of Spain shortly after leaving England.

The Shenandoah sailed south then east across the Indian Ocean and into the South Pacific and was in Micronesia at the time of the surrender of Lee's Army to the Union forces on April 9, 1865. By then, Waddell had already captured and disposed of thirteen Union merchantmen.

The Shenandoah destroyed one more prize in the Sea of Okhotsk, north of Japan, then continued to the Aleutians and into the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean. The Shenandoah came upon a fleet of Union ships whaling on June 22. She opened continuous fire, destroying a major portion of the Union whaling fleet. Capt. Waddell took aim at a fleeing whaler, Sophia Thornton, and at his signal, the gunner fired the last two shots of the American Civil War.

Shenandoah had so far captured and burned eleven ships of the American whaling fleet. Waddell finally learned of Lee's surrender on June 27 when the captain of the prize Susan & Abigail produced a newspaper from San Francisco. The same paper contained Confederate President Jefferson Davis's proclamation that the "war would be carried on with re-newed vigor". The Shenandoah proceeded to capture a further ten whalers in the following seven hours. Wadell then steered south, intending to raid the port of San Francisco. En route they encountered an English barque, Barracouta, on August 2 from which Wadell learned of the final collapse of the Confederacy and capture of President Davis. The long log entry of the Shenandoah for August 2, 1865, begins "The darkest day of my life." Captain Waddell realized then in his grief that they had taken innocent unarmed Union whaling ships as prizes when the rest of the country had ended hostilities.

Waddell immediately converted the warship back to a merchant ship. At this point all Waddell wanted to do was surrender the Shenandoah at a European port. Surrendering in an American port carried the certainty of facing a court with a Union point of view and the very real risk of a trial for piracy, for which he and the crew could be hanged. Sailing south around Cape Horn, they eventually arrived in England, having logged a total of over 58,000 miles around the world

in a year's travel—the only Confederate ship to circumnavigate the globe.

The last Confederate surrender did not occur until November 6, 1865, when Capt. Waddell surrendered at Liverpool. After an investigation by the British Admiralty court, Waddell and his crew were exonerated of doing anything that violated the laws of war and were unconditionally released. Shenandoah herself was sold to Sultan Majid bin Said of Zanzibar in 1866 and renamed El Majidi.

(There is a "bonus" 150 years ago on page 5.)

Upcoming Events

November 11, Veterans Day, Winona, MN

We will once again be a central part of the Veterans Day program at this impressive annual ceremony. All gun crew members should arrive by 10:15 am to unload the gun, assign positions and be ready for the program to begin at the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month. If you need more information, contact John Cain, Daryl or Brian Tomashek.



Short Notice!

There are two flyers announcing special events on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter. Both have very short response time!! Act quickly if you are interested in attending, especially the Ladies Tea—flyer on page 2.

Next Meeting

January 23, 2016 11:00

Marie's Underground Dining, Red Wing
For more info or directions, contact Ken Cunningham, (651) 388-2945.





2:00~4:00 p.m.

Tickets for Period Meal: \$25. Ea. non-refundable.

{14 years of age and older event. ~ Period or Modern day Dress.}

Reserve Your Seats by Check or Cash no later than Oct. 30 to:

**Reservations are due
OCTOBER 30th!!**

**If you plan to attend, call
to confirm and mail your
check ASAP.**

**Mrs. Bruce McNamara
35815 165th Ave.**

Goodhue, Minnesota 55027

**{3rd Minnesota ~ Civilian sponsored.}
TO TELEGRAPH QUESTIONS: (651) 301-5410**

We will have a table and our gun at this event. If interested in attending, call Daryl Duden.

2nd annual Veterans Day Ceremony

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015, 11 am
Southeast Technical College Student Commons
308 Pioneer Road, Red Wing

In honor of Veterans Day, a ceremony will be held to honor our country's Prisoners of War and Missing in Action heroes, veterans and service members.

JOIN US! for two special ceremony events:

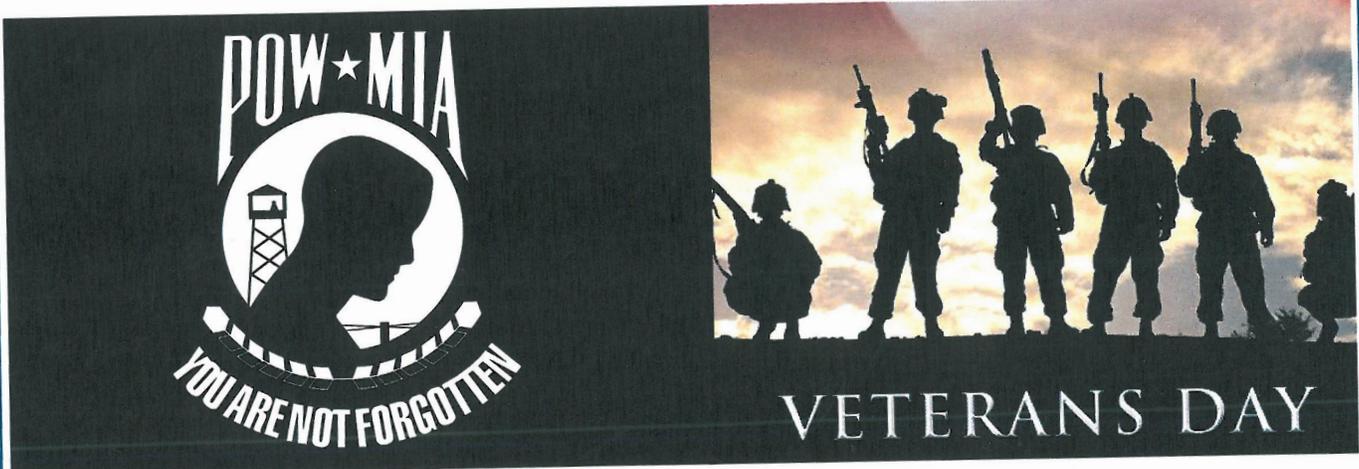


*Yellow Ribbon
Company
Proclamation*



*Ribbon cutting for
new Veterans Center
on campus.*

Veterans & service members are encouraged to wear their uniform.



Please take a few minutes of your day to honor those that have given the ultimate sacrifice for our daily freedom.

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE
**SOUTHEAST
TECHNICAL**
651-385-6300

Battery Profile

Ole Erickson

Ole was no help at all in determining how his name was properly spelled or even for certain what his full name was. His military papers show Erickson to be spelled with the double “rr” and Ole simply made his mark on the line indicated. By the time Ole filed for a pension in 1898, he could sign his name, but alternately spelled it Ericksen and Erickson. Further complicating his correct name is his obituary. It notes his name as Ole Erickson Renslo. His tombstone shows his name spelled with only one “r” and no mention of Renslo. What Ole wanted to be called will probably never be known.

Ole was born in Nas Prsldled, Norway, on June 1, 1841. He came to the United States in 1861, and was farming in Houston County, Minnesota, when he decided to enlist with the Second Minnesota Battery on September 3, 1864. His enlistment was for one year. He was 22 years old, stood 5’ 6” tall, had blue eyes, brown hair and a sandy complexion. Ole was probably promised a \$100 bounty to enlist; papers indicate he was owed \$66.66 when he was mustered out and other men who received a like amount in bounty at the end of the war had gotten a third of their pay up front. It also noted he kept his knapsack, haversack, and canteen as per government order #114 dated June 15, 1864.

Army life was not especially kind to Ole. After enlisting, he was sent to Fort Snelling where he came down with typhoid fever. He was in the fort hospital where he was said to be “out of his head” for quite some time. His recovery was slow and he lost so much weight that he could hardly walk. By January, he was found healthy enough to join the Battery camped near Chattanooga, Tennessee. The town they were quartered in was called Philadelphia and the men were staying in buildings rather than their tents. The barracks where Ole was staying was a large frame building and was “fixed with bed bunks one row above the other.”

The Battery was ordered out on the morning of July 4th, 1865, to go up a hill and fire a salute in honor of the day. Ole participated in the salute. After the salute was over, the men were ordered to breakfast, so they went back to their bunks to get their cups. Ole said he was getting his cup when he slipped off the stoop and fell, breaking his leg at or near the ankle. Another man in the Battery said that it had been reported Ole broke his leg when he fell while getting something from the top bunk, so where exactly Ole fell is unclear, but he did fall and did fall and break his leg.

The Battery had no doctor, but another regiment quartered nearby did. The doctor arrived, agreed the leg was broken and proceeded to build a box that reached from Ole’s foot to “some way up” on his leg. The doctor put bandages on the leg from the foot up onto the leg and packed the box with cotton. The description is hazy, but a rag drawn through a hole in the box was contrived in such a way that cold water could drip on the broken ankle.

Ole said, “Captain Hotchkiss and the officers and men were very good” to him and “did not send him to the hospital but kept him right in the company. At that time they had an idea the war was over and they would soon go home and for that reason kept him in the Company and before long they did start home.” Ole described a sling made from sticks and cloth to keep his foot elevated on “the cars”. When it was necessary to change trains at depots, four men carried Ole.

After the Battery arrived at Fort Snelling, Ole was tired and sick, so he was admitted to the post hospital for a few days. He was then given crutches and he practiced with them until he could walk at least as far as across the street. The ankle continued to give him trouble and Ole said it was hard for him to do any work for the first year after he returned home.

In 1867, Ole married Barbra Moen Olsen, a war widow, at Spring Grove, Minnesota, and they had five children. Barbra died on March 8, 1904.





The Springfield Armory, Springfield, Massachusetts

For nearly two centuries, the US Armed Forces and American industry looked to Springfield Armory for innovative engineering and superior firearms. The Springfield Armory National Historic Site commemorates the critical role of the nation's first armory by preserving and interpreting the world's largest historic US military small arms collection, along with historic archives, buildings, and landscapes

The Springfield Arsenal, a military supply depot, was sited by General Henry Knox, and approved by General George Washington in 1777. The arsenal became known as Springfield Armory in 1794 when on-site small arms manufacturing was approved by President Washington

The Springfield Armory functioned in tandem with its sister armory in Harpers Ferry, (West) Virginia, providing arms for the nation from 1795 until Harpers Ferry Armory was burned down during the Civil War. Today, both sites are units of the National Park Service.

Several Battery members recently visited the Springfield Armory and completely enjoyed the site, highly recommending it as a must-see site for anyone traveling in Massachusetts. It is also not very far away from the final resting place of the only officer from the Battery to lose his life in battle, Albert Woodbury. His body was taken to Charlton, Mass, to be buried beside his mother.



During a thunderstorm during the Civil War, a sentry's musket and bayonet was struck by lightning, leaving it twisted into a bizarre shape displayed at the Springfield, Massachusetts, Arsenal. Despite the intense heat generated by the lightning, the cartridge did not explode. It was found in the breech when the weapon was brought to the museum for cataloging and preservation in 1981.

The identify of the sentry, who did survive the lightning strike, is not known. It is believed that he was a Confederate since, while the rifle is a Springfield contract arm, the bayonet is believed to be of Confederate manufacture. The bullet is displayed in a glass tube.



On This Date-150 Years Ago

December 1865:

On December 6, 1865, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, officially ending the institution of slavery, is ratified. "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." With these words, the single greatest change wrought by the Civil War was officially noted in the Constitution.

The ratification came eight months after the end of the war, but it represented the culmination of the struggle against slavery. When the war began, some in the North were against fighting what they saw as a crusade to end slavery. Although many northern Democrats and conservative Republicans were opposed to slavery's expansion, they were ambivalent about outlawing the institution entirely. The war's escalation after the first battle caused many to rethink the role slavery played in creating the conflict. In September 1862, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that all slaves in territory still in rebellion on January 1, 1863, would be declared forever free. The

move was largely symbolic, as it only freed slaves in areas outside of Union control, but it changed the conflict from a war for reunification of states to a war whose objectives included the destruction of slavery.

Lincoln believed that a constitutional amendment was necessary to ensure the end of slavery. In 1864, Congress debated several proposals. Some insisted on including provisions to prevent discrimination against blacks, but the Senate Judiciary Committee provided the eventual language. It borrowed from the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, when slavery was banned from the area north of the Ohio River. The Senate passed the amendment in April 1864.

A Republican victory in the 1864 presidential election would guarantee the success of the amendment. The Republican platform called for the "utter and complete destruction" of slavery, while the Democrats favored restoration of states' rights, which would include at least the possibility for the states to maintain slavery. Lincoln's overwhelming victory set in motion the events leading to ratification of the amendment. The House passed the measure in January 1865 and it was sent to the states for ratification. When Georgia ratified it on December 6, 1865, the institution of slavery officially ceased to exist in the United States.

Recap

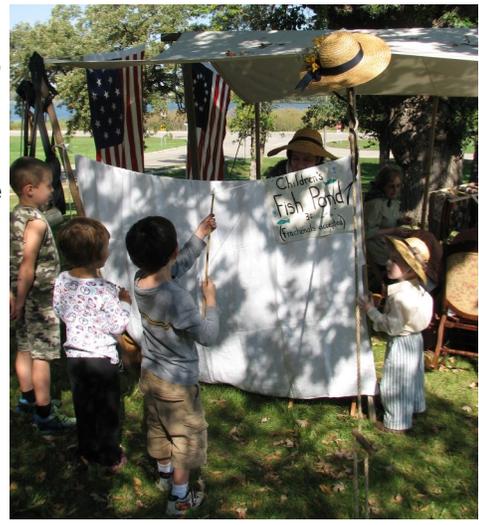
September 12 1812 Overture, New Ulm

Battery members Ken Cunningham, Bill Crowder, Daryl Duden, Ben Mullen and Mark Mullen travelled to Hermann Park in New Ulm MN to participate in "Thunder in the Valley," an event hosted by the New Ulm Battery and the New Ulm Municipal Band. Eleven Civil War era cannons accompanied the band during a stirring patriotic concert. Bugler Bill began and ended the concert with traditional Civil War bugle calls and the remainder of our men fell in with our friends from Battery I, 1st US, helping man their original bronze 12 Pdr Napoleon. During the 1 1/2 hour concert, cannons were used to accompany the 1812 Overture and five additional selections.

Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. Duden

September 26, Kandiyohi County Historical Society, Willmar, MN

More perfect weather could not have been described for this event as it was sunny and warm beyond expectations for the end of September! We set up several "stations" for visitors to stop by and talk—and boy did they! We noticed that most of the visitors stayed a loooong time, asking many questions and expressing a real interest. Though the crowd was slightly smaller than the last time we were there, it was still pretty steady with people all day. The hospitality expressed by the staff and volunteers at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society was so warm and welcoming! It was a very nice event, enjoyed by all who attended.



Recap (continued)

Fall Camporee BSA, October 3

On this day, members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery provided a Civil War learning experience during the 2015 Fall Camporee of the Soaring Eagle District of Gateway Area Council Boy Scouts of America. Nearly 100 attendees were divided into five groups to rotate through the learning stations manned by battery members.



At Station One: Ron Graves in the uniform of a US General and Tanya Graves in the uniform of a CS private discussed men's and women's roles during the war. Station Two, which included two A tents and one dog tent, provided an excellent backdrop for Briar Golden, dressed as a CS soldier and Neil Bruce dressed in full US cavalry uniform to discuss uniforms and equipment soldiers were issued during the war. A period tent fly with tables full of pistols, carbines, rifles and swords used during the war was Station Three, Michael Ritchie in US artillery uniform and Bart Hoekstra in US infantry uniform



discussed and demonstrated the use of Civil War era small arms. Our full scale Model 1861 10 Pdr. Parrott Rifle with Limber was Station Four. Dressed as US artillerists; Ken Cunningham, Bruce Arnoldy, Ron Wendel and Daryl Duden provided information about limbers and Civil War artillery pieces, discussed the equipment and responsibilities of each member of a Federal ten man gun crew, and trained five new recruits (BSA members) to participate in the firing of our gun to signify the end of each session. At Station Five, another period tent fly, Mandy Wendel mixed and discussed medicines, potions and shared various other aspects doctors and nurses used to treat the sick and wounded during the Civil War.



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During a noon break, while boy scouts prepared their own lunch in camp, event staff invited Battery members into the mess hall for a wonderful hot lunch they had prepared for us. The food was plentiful, delicious and seconds were welcomed. Did anyone else notice Pvt Cunningham made four trips back to the table to refill his calico beans?



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

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Phone: (651) 388-2945

Treasurer

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Red Wing, MN 55066

Phone: (651) 388-6520

Twin Cites Metro Area Contact

Ron & Vickie Wendel
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Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Phone: (763) 754-2476

E-mail: momwendel@hotmail.com

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

Great weather, great audience and a great time. On behalf of Lisa Schock, Arcadia Troop 64 helper and event planner, Thank You to all the members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery who participated.

Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. Duden

