



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 244

April 2017

### On This Date-155 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.

### Upcoming Events

#### **May 15 Calvin Christian School, Edina MN 4015 Inglewood Ave. S, Edina.**

Arrive at 9:00 to set up, students arrive at 9:50. We will set up 5 stations and rotate students through. BRING A BAG LUNCH!

#### **May 29 Memorial Day, Red Wing, MN**

Arrive at Bay Point Park by 8:00 to set up. There will be a reading by one of our Battery members for the Memorial Day service and honor volleys from our gun. RSVP to Daryl Duden or John Cain.

### Military Leadership

As prescribed in the Battery bylaws, the annual election of military leaders was held at the March meeting (April 1). Nominations were asked from the floor and white ballots cast.

The 2017 military leadership for the Second Minnesota Battery will be as follows:

Lieutenant	John Cain
Quartermaster Sergeant	Ron Graves
Sergeant	Daryl Duden
Corporal	Ron Wendel
Corporal	James Livingstone

Congratulations these people and thank you for your willingness to lead in 2017.



### Next Meeting

**April 29, 2017 11:00am**

Marie's Underground Dining, Red Wing  
Call Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items.  
651 388-2945.



# 2017 Event Calendar

This is the approved calendar for the Second Minnesota Battery for 2017

- May 15** Edina, MN Calvin Christian School, 5th grade; 9:50am – 2:35pm
- May 29** Red Wing, MN Memorial Day Observance
- June 10-11** Fairfax, MN, Fort Ridgley State Park. Encampment and demonstrations
- July 15-16** Rochester, MN, 1860's Living History Fair; Olmsted Co. History Center. Saturday reenactment will be Battle of Perryville
- July 29** Battle Lake, MN Prospect House & Civil War Museum. Grand Opening celebration of renovated Museum. (PAID event)
- Aug 11-12** Arcadia, WI. 2017 Ashley for the Arts. TENTATIVE pending additional event information
- Aug 26-27** Morristown, MN Ahlman's Shooter's Roundup
- Sep 23-24** Pilot Knob, MO. Battle of Pilot Knob; Fort Davidson Historic Site <http://www.battleofpilotknob.org/reenactment.html>
- Nov. 11 Winona, MN. Veteran's Day Tribute; Veteran's Memorial Park

## Battery Profile

### John Soper

John was living with his family in Dayton, Minnesota, where they were farmers. The family was from New York, John had been born in Black Lake, New York, on July 22, 1844. He was the oldest of the five children living at home.

When the call came for soldiers, the Soper family answered. By the time John was asking for permission to enlist, his father and brother were already serving in the First Minnesota Infantry. John was one of the very earliest men to be mustered into the Second Battery on December 12, 1861. The note of permission, signed by his mother, was dated three days later. John was 18 years old, had blue eyes, light hair, and a light complexion. He was 5' 7-1/2" tall, and listed his occupation as that of farmer.

John's service in the Battery was unremarkable. He was a steady soldier and was not reported sick throughout the entire time of his service. He was reported on "daily duty" on January 30, 1863, but no other remarks appear in his records or in the Battery's morning reports. When his three years were up, John veteranized, earned a veteran's furlough and went back to Minnesota to spend his 30 days. Since John was still under legal age, being only 20 when the time came to reenlist, his captain signed the permission notice stating he was John's legal guardian at the time.

When the war ended, the Battery was mustered out of the service and the men picked up their civilian lives.

John went back to Hennepin County and on June 9, 1868, he married Alice Porter. They had seven children. When John applied for a pension, he noted that two of the children were dead.

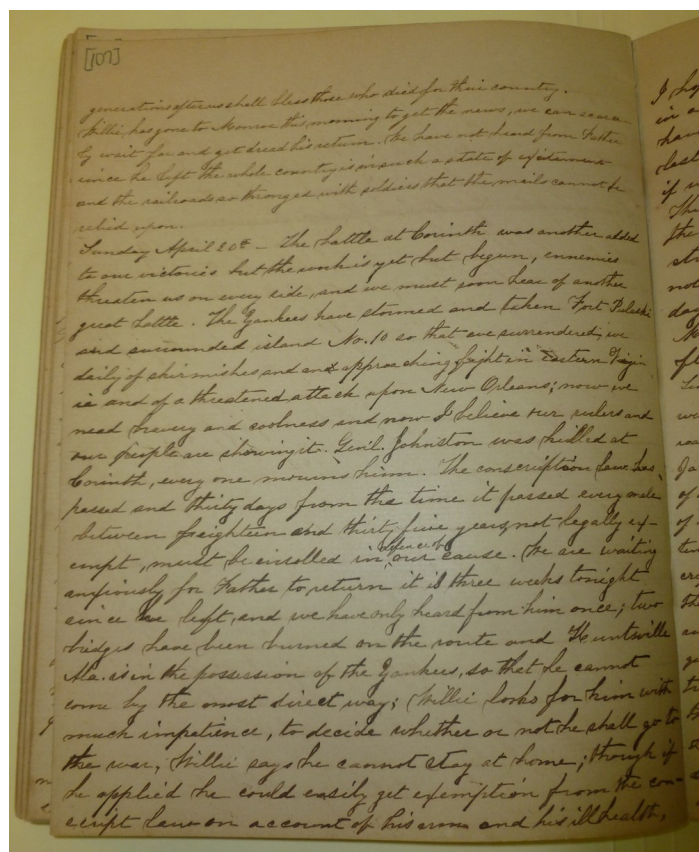
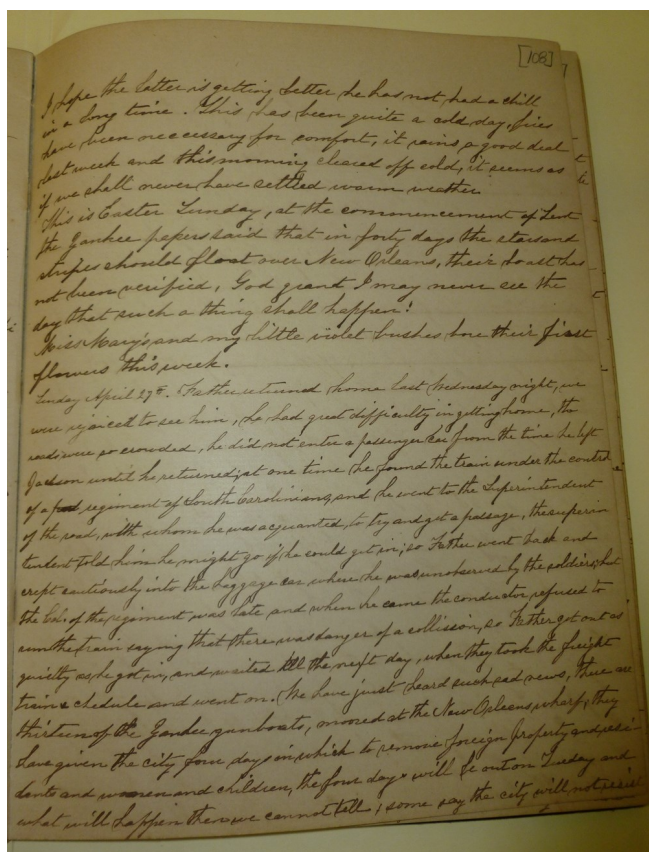
By 1907, John and Alice were living in Nickerson, Pine County, Minnesota. They were still farming and John noted that for a time, they had lived in Superior, Wisconsin.

Late in February of 1922, John was struck with what was then called a "hemorrhage of the brain." He did not linger long, his death came quickly after the hemorrhage. The winter weather then stepped into add one last bit of confusion to John's story. A raging blizzard across northern Minnesota was so bad, it was not safe for the family to venture out to take John's body out. Neither could the undertaker get to them to care for John's remains. When the storm let up, the family purchased an "air tight coffin" and took John to Superior to an "undertaking parlor" for preparation for burial. This caused some confusion in the date of John's death, but both his wife and his daughter stated he died on February 25, even though the undertaker recorded the death several days later.

John was laid to rest in the Soldier's Circle of the Greenwood Cemetery in Superior, Wisconsin.







## 20 April 1862: "This is Easter Sunday, at the commencement of Lent the Yankee papers said that in forty days the stars and stripes should float over New Orleans, their boast has not been verified."

Sarah Lois Wadley wrote these words in her diary at the end of her Easter holiday in 1862. She was the daughter of a railroad superintendent, born in New Hampshire. Although born in New England, she was raised in the South, and lived with her family in homes near Amite in Tangipahoa Parish, Monroe and Oakland in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana., and near Macon, Georgia. Her diary is currently held in the University of North Carolina's library. The following is a transcription of her diary pages from April 20, 1862.

Sunday, April 20th—

The battle at Corinth was another added to our victories but the work is yet but begun, enemies threaten us on every side, and we must soon hear of another great battle. The Yankees have stormed and taken Fort Pulaski and surrounded island No. 10 so that we surrendered. we daily [hear] of skirmishes and an approaching fight in eastern Virginia and of a threatened attack upon New Orleans; now we need bravery and coolness and now I believe our rulers and our people are showing it.

Gen'l. Johnston was killed at Corinth, every one mourns him. The conscription law has passed, and thirty days from the time it passed every male between eighteen and thirty-five years, not legally exempt, must be enrolled in defence of our cause. We are waiting anxiously for Father to return it is three weeks tonight since he left, and we have only heard from him once; two bridges have been burned on the route and Huntsville Ala. is in the possession of the Yankees, so that he cannot come by the most direct way; Willie looks for him with much impatience, to decide whether or not he shall go to the war, Willie says he cannot stay at home; though if he applied he could easily get exemption from the conscript laws on account of his arm and his ill health, I hope the latter is getting better he has not had a chill in a long time. This has been quite a cold day, fires have been necessary for comfort, it rains a good deal last week and this morning cleared off cold, it seems as if we shall never have settled warm weather.

This is Easter Sunday, at the commencement of Lent the Yankee papers said that in forty days the stars and stripes should float over New Orleans, their boast has not been verified. God grant I may never see the day that such a thing shall happen!

Miss Mary's and my little violet bushes bore their first flowers this week.



# Recap

## March 11-12 Work Weekend



Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery conducted a "work weekend" to perform minor repairs, cleaning and maintenance on our field equipment. The First Student Bus Garage provided an excellent venue to conduct all the work required. Work completed included sanding and painting the gun, gun carriage, limber, limber chest, limber chest cooler and gun implements. The limber chest cooler was also repaired and thoroughly cleansed. The sign on the gun trailer was repaired and all the equipment bolts on the gun trailer were checked and tightened. We also took this opportunity to grease the axles on both the gun carriage and limber. Saturday volunteers included John Cain, Ken Cunningham, Daryl Duden, Bart Hoekstra, James Livingstone, Lynn Wendel, Mandy Wendel, Ron Wendel and Vickie Wendel. Sunday Volunteers were Ken Cunningham, Daryl Duden, Celeste Hemmelman, James Livingstone (assisted by daughter Mikaela) and Brian Tomashek. Thank you to all the volunteers who donated their time and talent to this project and to President Ken Cunningham for making the arrangements for the use of the First Student facility.

HUZZAH!

Respectfully submitted,  
SGT Duden



## March 25, Civil War Symposium, Mankato

2nd Minnesota Battery members Teresa Bergdale (one of the presenters), John Cain (soliciting funds for the Boys of '61), Ken Cunningham and Daryl Duden travelled to Mankato to attend this symposium. Its purpose was to raise funds to provide perpetual maintenance on the "Boy in Blue" Civil War monument in Mankato. There was a smaller audience than in previous years, but the five topics presented were new, interesting, well researched and diverse. Topics included: The similarities of the Civil War and the Great War (WWI); The history of the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) & the W.R.C. (Women's Relief Corps); the history of "Old Abe", the live eagle mascot of the 8th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment; Abraham Lincoln's challenges in foreign diplomacy during the Civil War; and the men who served in Missouri as Confederate Partisan

Rangers (guerrillas) during the Civil War. Q & A was included in each individual session and a buffet lunch provided a nice break half way through the day. The symposium ended with a panel discussion based on comments and questions that were solicited from the attendees. This was another successful learning experience for everyone who attended.

Respectfully submitted,

***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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