

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 246

June 2017

On This Date-155 Years Ago

June, 1862

Frank Flint wrote home to tell of life in the Battery during June of 1862. The George he speaks of is George Russell, also a private in the Battery and Jennie's uncle.

*Camp Clear Creek, Miss.
June 15, 1862*

Dear Jennie,

We have been on the march most of the time since we came here. We are marching toward Hamburg again now. We have been here two days and I don't know when we will leave.

I am sitting on the ground in a little brush tent that George and I made. Geo. is well and is fixing for a grand inspection which will be held tomorrow. I am all ready but blacking my boots and fixing my sword a little. We have to look as nice as possible on such occasions which comes rather hard on me as I am rather inclined to be a little dirty. Supper is ready and I have to go or I won't get any.

I have been to supper and had what we call a pretty good one. We had one biscuit and a cup of tea each. We have had biscuit once before since we left Benton Barracks. We have hard bread, smoked meat and coffee most of the time. This is the wildest country I ever saw. You don't see a house once in a dog's age and when you do see it, it is nothing but a shanty. I have read a good many stories about the beautiful sunny South but haven't seen any of it but the sunny and there is so much of that that it spoiles the whole.

We are three miles from Corinth where the Rebels left, I don't know where they are now. We followed them for four days did not see one.

Frank

(The letter was typed as Frank wrote it, grammar, spelling and all. Punctuation was the only thing added for clarity.)

Upcoming Events

June 10-11, Fort Ridgely, Fairfax, MN

72404 County Road 30, Fairfax, MN. The Fifth Minnesota is hosting this encampment event at the historic site of the Fort. Plans include a "schedule" of what we usually do at our school stations. Visitors will be given this schedule and each station will do a school type presentation at their time. This is hoped to get more people to all of the stations rather than just the first couple of stations near the main building.

NOTE: This site is inside the state park and a park pass is required. STOP AT THE PARK CONTACT STATION and they will provide you with a weekend pass for the park at no charge. The site is open from 10-5 and we will be doing living history during these hours. We can set up as early as Friday morning, but we must be set up and ready for the public by 10 am Saturday.

July 15-16, 1860s Living History Fair, Olmstead County Historical Society, Rochester, MN

This will be a very special event as we will be portraying the events surrounding the Second Battery at the battle of Perryville right down to the details of leaving Pvt. James Hunter wounded on the field! More info will be coming about the event in the next weeks as the final details are worked out. Plan to attend this special event!

July 29 Battle Lake, MN Prospect House & Civil War Museum

This event will celebrate the Grand Opening of their renovated Museum. It is a single day event and we are paid for it, so we need to have a good turn out. Besides that, it's a very nice event! It is also a chance to see some amazing artifacts in this special museum.

Next Meeting

July 1, 2017 11:00am

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



Battery Profile

William E. Pulk

William was born on July 5, 1844, in Nova Scotia, Canada. By 1861, he was living in Minnesota and working as a farmer in Ramsey County. William was one of the very earliest men to enlist in the Second Battery; he joined in December of 1861 as the unit was just starting to be recruited. William was single, had hazel eyes, light hair and complexion, and stood 5' 9-3/4" tall.

Private was the only rank William ever held in the army, even though he did reenlist at the end of his first three years of service. His second term of enlistment earned him a bounty and a furlough. Throughout his time in the Second Battery, William was little noted. He was recorded as having been sent to the field hospital on June 4, 1863, and returned to duty on September 17th. In the spring of 1865, he was detailed with a group of Second Battery men to cut logs for a Major Church. Other than these two brief mentions, William does not appear in the morning reports or special orders of the Battery.

Since William could not write his name to sign the enlistment papers, he made his mark with witnesses present to testify that it was his mark. Not being able to write may be one reason why so little is known about William. After the war, he was discharged with the Battery in August of 1865 and disappeared until 1877 when he applied for a pension.

William told the Pension Department he had lost his hearing from the fighting at Chickamauga. Serving on the gun crew made this an acceptable disability and William was granted his pension. Other information in his pension application stated that William was also suffering with Bright's Disease, Dropsy, and "quick consumption," the causes of death on November 29, 1889.

William was living in Russell, Kansas, with his wife and three children at the time of his death. He was laid to rest with a military marker and all the ceremony of the Lucas Post of the GAR in the Lucas City Cemetery, Lucas, Kansas.



Trouble and questions arose when William's wife, Luan, applied for his widow's pension. According to the Pension Department, William had another wife named Hannah living in Wisconsin and *she* was collecting a widow's pension from William's service. Luan provided a copy of her marriage certificate showing that she and William were married by a justice of the peace in Russell, Kansas, on August 8, 1880. She listed the names and birth dates of their four children, including the death dates of the two children who had died. She signed a statement that she had tried to find proof of another marriage for William, but she could not find anything to prove he had another wife.

The Pension Department stood firm and sent Luan a letter stating that even though there had been no children by the Wisconsin wife, there had also been no divorce. That meant Luan was not the legal wife of William since he already had a wife when he married Luan. Luan received no pension money as William's widow.

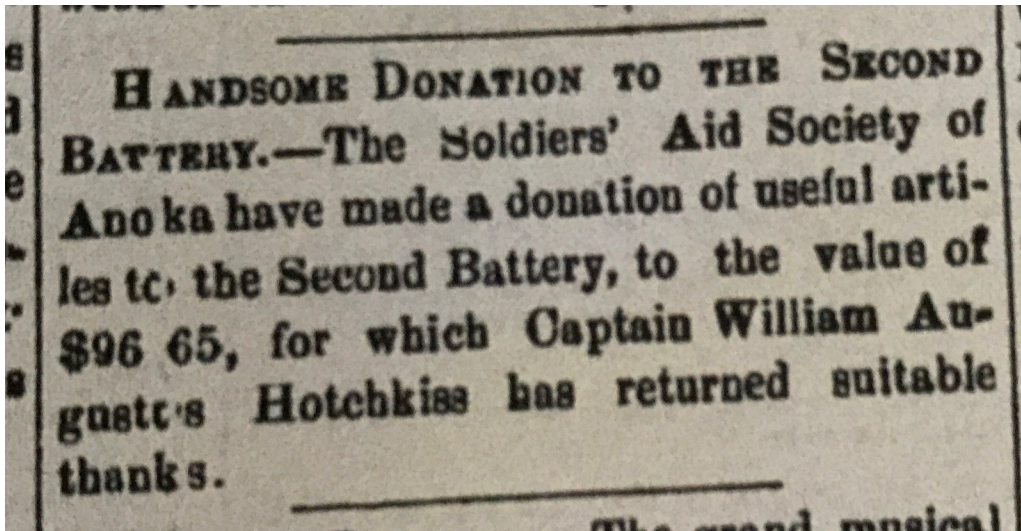
An odd article appeared in the *Russell Record* newspaper on Christmas Eve of 1898. It said, *Mrs. Pulk may "tender her thanks to the ladies for aiding her" in securing her daughter from the Orphan's home; but there are hundreds of people here who know all the circumstances and who would have been more thankful if the girl had been allowed to remain there where she would have had surroundings more conducive to good citizenship than she can get where she is. Many well-meaning persons oftentimes do much harm.*

It was the only mention of the incident and nothing indicates if the daughter in question was Sarah, born in 1883, or Ida, born in 1884. Another reference stated that Sarah was adopted by Dr. H. H. Russell, of that same community, but no other details were provided.

What all the "circumstances" were surrounding William's married life and his children were secrets William took with him to the grave.

Research *NEVER* ends!!

There have been some changes in the newspaper database at the Minnesota Historical Society and a new way of searching turned up nearly 100 articles about the Soldiers' Aid Societies in Minnesota. The best find was this article from the St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat on April 17, 1862.



This article confirms that there was an active Soldiers' Aid Society operating in Anoka in early 1862, but it raises other questions.

Current research indicates local SAS groups sent their goods to the USSC and the goods were sorted and distributed to the troops from that organization. This article is very clear that the Anoka group sent their donation directly to the Second Battery. Other articles found in this search also mention local groups sending boxes directly to Minnesota troops. Did they not send donations to the USSC because there was no active USSC in Minnesota until much later in the war? Was it a common practice to send to your own troops among SAS groups everywhere or just in Minnesota? What effect did that have on the USSC?

And what was in the box these ladies sent that was valued at \$96.65?!! How big was that box?!

As so often happens with research, one question gets answered and that answer raises ten more questions. It's a good reason to never stop researching!

1860's – Science & Technology

Submitted by Katie Demarco

Typewriters – Although there were earlier versions of typing instruments, the first commercially successful typewriter was invented in 1868 by three Americans in Milwaukee. The patent was later sold to Remington Co. who successfully marketed the QWERTY keyboard “typewriter”.

Paper Dress Patterns - Ebenezer Butterick began The Butterick Company in 1863, introducing templates for children's clothing, and offering every pattern in a series of standard sizes. In 1866, Butterick began manufacturing patterns for women's fashions, and later added some patterns of men's articles of clothing.

Speed of Light Measured – Although Galileo is credited with first trying to measure the speed of light in 1638, it was the French physicist, Leon Foucault who in 1862, determined that light traveled at 299,796 Km/s. That result continues to be the accepted measurement by international standards today.

Antiseptic Surgery – The introduction of antiseptic surgical methods came as a result of a paper published in 1867 by Joseph Lister. Lister advocated the use of carbolic acid to sterilize surgical instruments and to clean wounds to kill any germs present. In 1879, Listerine mouthwash was named after him for his work in antiseptics.

Recap

May 15 Calvin Christian School, Edina MN

As always, these students are great fun to work with and their preparation certainly shows! We had a wonderful time sharing our stations with the students and their chaperones.



The day started out sunny, but by lunchtime, the clouds had moved in and we were watching our “weather rock” closely as bands of yellow and orange drew closer. We finished three rotations of students, lunch and about two thirds of the fourth rotation before the skies opened up and it began to pour down rain. We moved the students under the flies with the start of the rain, but when the first thunder claps sounded,



we scrambled to gather up enough items to finish the station and complete the last rotation inside the school. Thankfully, the lightening stopped and even the rain let up in time for the last group of students to be outside to fire the gun. Once again, we were pleased to see the level of learning these students displayed and we look forward to returning to this school in 2018—which will be our 15th year at Calvin Christian School.



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

May 29 Memorial Day, Red Wing, MN

Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery once again participated in the Red Wing Memorial Day Observance in Bay Point Park. Although scattered showers were in the forecast, we were loading the gun and limber back on the trailer before the first raindrops fell. Bruce Arnoldy read Logan’s Proclamation during the program and was seated behind the podium with other dignitaries. After the other patriotic speeches and musical interludes, the names of fifty-six veterans from Red Wing who passed this life since last Memorial Day were read. They were honored with floral tribute, artillery salute and an all-veteran firing squad salute.

Battery members participating in the artillery salute were Neil Bruce, John Cain, Mike Cunningham, Daryl Duden, Briar Golden, James Livingstone, Ben Norman, Michael Ritchie, Steven Scurek, John Warne and Riley Warne. The sound of the gunfire bouncing off the river cliffs helped remind everyone of the sacrifices our veterans are willing make to keep our nation safe. Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. Duden