2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

"ACTION FRONT"

Circular No. 251 November 2017

On This Date-155 Years Ago

October, 2017—New Book Released

Dennis Gaffney offers a sneak peek into a new book, *The Seven-Day Scholar: The Civil War,* by Dennis Gaffney and Peter Gaffney. Here are 10 things you might not know about America's most devastating domestic conflict. (Continued from last month)

3. **Harriet Tubman led a raid to free slaves during the Civil War.**

Harriet Tubman, the escaped slave who led others to freedom on the Underground Railroad before the war, arrived at the Union camp at Port Royal, South Carolina, in the spring of 1862 to support the Union cause. She began teaching freed slave women skills that could earn them wages with the Union Army. But soon she was gathering intelligence about the countryside from the freed slaves and taking river reconnaissance trips. On June 1, 1863, Tubman and Union Colonel James Montgomery steamed into the interior with 300 black Union soldiers. The troops swept through nearby plantations, burning homes and barns as Union gunboats sounded their whistles. Slave men, women and children came streaming from the countryside, reminding Tubman of "the children of Israel, coming out of Egypt." More than 720 slaves were shuttled to freedom during the mission. In the first raid led by a woman during the Civil War, Tubman liberated 10 times the number of slaves she had freed in 10 years on the Underground Railroad.

4. Lincoln was shot at—and almost killed— nearly two years before he was assassinated.

Late one August evening in 1863, after an exhausting day at the White House, Lincoln rode alone by horse to the Soldiers' Home, his family's summer residence. A private at the gate heard a shot ring out and, moments later, the horse galloped into the compound, with a bareheaded Lincoln clinging to his steed. Lincoln explained that a gunshot had gone off at the foot of the hill, sending the horse galloping so fast it knocked his hat off. Two soldiers retrieved Lincoln's hat, which had a bullet hole right through it. The president asked the guards to keep the incident under wraps: He didn't want to worry his wife Mary.

More next month

Upcoming Events

November 11, Winona, MN Veterans Day

This annual recognition in a beautiful park on the lake shore has includes a salute from our gun at the conclusion of the ceremonies. We will once again provide a gun crew for the day—weather permitting. Snow could preclude our participation if hauling the gun is a hazard. Those attending should arrive at the park by 9:45 to unload the gun and be ready for the program that starts at 11:11 am.

Events for 2018

Please begin gathering information on events that we may want to consider for the 2018 reenacting season. A list of these potential events will be compiled and discussed starting in February with a final vote on the 2018 calendar in March.

Congratulations Bracy & Shianne!

Our own Private Bracy Bahm was married on October 28. We wish the newlyweds all the happiness in the world! We hope to see them in camp one of these days—Shianne, we can probably find a dress to fit you!

Next Meeting

December 2, 2017 11:00am

Marie's Underground Dining, Red Wing

Call Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items. 651 388-2945.

Battery Profile

David Jarvis, Jr.

In pursuance on Military Notice, I respectfully present Myself as an applicant for Examination before the Examining board, to obtain a Commission as 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Heavy Artillery Colored Troops.

I am twenty-four years of age, was born in the town of Earls-Ferry, Fife Shire, Scotland, by occupation a carpenter, perminant resident St. Cloud, Stearns County, State of Minnesota. present Post Office address, Army Gun-boat Silver Lake, No. 2, box 365, Nashville Tenn,

I was Mustered into the U.S. Volunteer service by Capt A.D. Nelson, U.S.A, on the 21st day of March 1862, at Fort Snelling, State of Minnesota. Present at the siege of Corinth, Miss, in May 1862. In company with th Army under Gen. Buell, In the Campaign of 1862, was engaged in the Battle of Perryville, KY.-- ordered to Hospital at Nashville by means of sickness on the 12th day of Dec. 1862.--Detailed on board Army Gun-boat Silver Lake No. 2 on the 2nd day of April 1863 where I have remained until the present.

Respectfully & Obt. Servant
Private David Jarvis
2nd Battery Minnesota Vols.
Detailed on Gun-boat Silver Lake No. 2

David's letter provided his background as he hoped to receive a commission as an officer with the Heavy Artillery. A letter written by an officer on the gunboat noted that David acted "in the capacity of gunner for a year aboard the Gun-boat *Silver Lake* No. 2 and for his efficiency and skill in his duties has always elicited the warmest praise of his superior officers and is in my opinion eminently well qualified to fill any position as line officer in Heavy Artillery."

A comrade and commanding officer in the Second Minnesota wrote that "his moral standing is good and that he had acted with the Battery on the field of battle in such a manner as to meet the approval and praise of his Officers. I do cheerfully recommend him for Subordination to discipline and efficiency as a soldier".

What happened is unknown, but David did not receive his commission. Instead, he went back to and remained with the Second Minnesota Battery until he was mustered out three months later. The descriptive roll of the Battery said he was 5' 3" tall, with light hair, blue eyes, and a light complexion.

Very few Minnesota men served in the Navy during the Civl War, so David's detail to a gunboat for over a year puts him in a select class. The *Silver Lake* was a wooden sternwheeler built in 1862 in Pennsylvania and put into service on Christmas eve. She served as a member of the squadron of gunboats on the Cumberland River tasked with preventing Confederate supplies from crossing.

A serious outbreak of small pox on the *Silver Lake* began in February of 1863. The sick men were taken to Paducah, Kentucky, but she did not cease operations. In company with two other gunboats, the Silver Lake had shelled Confederate troops at Florence, Tennessee and forced them to abandon the town. By April, her gun platforms needed work and she needed new crew members. David was detailed to the *Silver Lake* on April 2, 1863. How he was chosen for the duty is unknown, but it does make sense to bring an artillery man on board. David would have been quite familiar with Parrott rifles and howitzers since those were guns used in the Second Minnesota. The Silver Lake had those same guns, but somewhat larger in scale. Her Parrots were 20 pounders and her howitzers 24 pounders.

On April 3, the day after David was assigned to the gunboat, the *Silver Lake* destroyed the small town of Palmyra in retaliation for attacks on gunboats by guerrilla forces. Other action David saw while on the *Silver Lake* included a battle with Confederate batteries near Bells Mills, Tennessee in December. Not long after, the *Silver Lake* helped recaptured three transports taken earlier by Southern troops.

David stayed on the gunboat until January 13, 1865. This was the time when the Battery members were making the choice to reenlist or not as many of them were at or near their three years. David chose not to reenlist and was mustered out at the end of his term of service on March 28, 1865.

It is possible David did not return to Minnesota as in 1865, he noted that he was living in the City of Brooklyn, New York, where he stayed until 1898.

The next year, David was living in Clayton, New York. He married a widow, Mary Lapentigny, on October 29, 1899, in New Jersey. David and Mary went back to Clayton where they lived for about five years before they moved to Watertown, New York. They stayed there for another five years before moving back to Clayton.

David was receiving a pension in 1906. His disability was poor health, a pair of ruptures and almost total deafness. David blamed the army for his disabilities.

A letter appears in David's pension file dated June 13, 1912. It was written by his stepdaughter, Miss A.A. Slawson. She was pleading with the Pension Department to give her David's address. No further information on why, how, or if this occurred.

David died on June 9, 1915. His death certificate noted that he had been born on October 29, 1839, and was a contractor by trade. The informant on the certificate was not his wife, Mary, though David was listed as married rather than widowed and Mary filed for a widow's pension after David's death.

David was buried in the Clayton Cemetery in New York. None of the present day Battery members has as of yet made it to New York in search of David's grave for a photo.

A Senator Speaks Out Against Confederate Monuments… in 1910

Alone in his stand, Weldon Heyburn despised that Robert E. Lee would be memorialized with a statue in the U.S. Capitol

From the website: Smithsonian.com October 18, 2017, written by Cynthia Greenlee

Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol

Captured in a bronze likeness, Robert E. Lee stares off into the distance. He seems deep in thought — perhaps mulling an alternate history of victory in which the general who led the Confederate Army emerges victorious.

The statue, still standing today in the U.S. Capitol building, is part of the National Statuary Hall Collection of 100 sculptures of founding fathers and luminaries from all 50 states. The statue, sculpted by Virginia artist Edward Valentine, depicts Lee wearing his Confederate uniform and carrying a hat in hand, signs of the humility and noble surrender that Lee loyalists claimed were his greatest trait and accomplishment. In 1909, Valentine's memorial to Lee joined sculptures to other historical movers and shakers in the Hall.

But Senator Weldon B. Heyburn, an Idaho Republican, would have none of it. The following year, in January 1910, Heyburn let loose with a hell-raising speech that, according to newspaper reports of the time, called the placement of the general's statue in the Capitol a "desecration" and compared Lee to an infamous suspected traitor from another time.

"Do you think that those men in Congress on the 2nd of July 1864 [when passing legislation that created the Statuary Hall] ever contemplated for a moment that any state, under any condition, at any time, would place the statue of Benedict Arnold in that hall?"

A man whose physical girth that would rival future President William Howard Taft's (whose size inspired a presidential "urban legend" about getting stuck in the White House bathtub), Heyburn never lacked for opinions. He championed Western states and railed that the federal government should not have the power to establish protected national forests — an argument that played well with mining interests he often represented as a lawyer even while in Congress. He resisted child labor laws and shorter workweeks, charging that regulation would gut free enterprise. But even as his pet issues conflicted with many tenets of the Progressive period — during which many Americans looked to the government to tackle social ills in a rapidly changing country — Heyburn was a main sponsor of the Pure Food and Drug Act that laid the groundwork for today's Food and Drug Administration.

During his decade-long congressional career, Heyburn became one of the Senate's best-known contrarians — and the most voluble opponent of anything that hinted of sympathy for the Old South.

In various addresses, Heyburn, an attorney and Pennsylvania Quaker descendant who allegedly heard the cannon fire from Gettysburg as a youth, railed against the Lee statue's placement in the Capitol's hallowed halls. These remarks displayed what a fellow Idaho legislator euphemistically called his fluency in the "language of conflict."

In his comments, Heyburn urged Virginia to consider some of its other historical figures instead: "In sending us figures for the 'National Hall of Fame,' I would advise you to not to overlook your Marshalls, your early Lees, your Monroes, and your Henrys." In other words, chose any other patriotic native son than Lee, who had left his position in the U.S. Army to take a Confederate command.

Heyburn's soliloquy was interrupted only by interjections from Arkansas Sen. Jeff Davis (not to be confused with the Confederacy's first and only president). In a moment that presaged contemporary ways to discredit a politician, Davis asked, "Did the senator ever fight in the war?" To which Heyburn — who was too young to enlist during the Civil War — fired back: "That is the stock retort of a cheap reporter."

Heyburn hammered home his consistent distaste for any use of federal property or funds for Confederate commemoration. veterans for a national reunion. Later, on February 8, 1910, he protested the lending of government-owned tents to Confederate veterans and took a swipe at the Lee statue again in a booming 40-minute oration:

"I ask you in the interest of loyalty and harmony to say to the people who have sent this image to come

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and take it away. Take it away and worship it, if you please. But don't intrude it upon the people who do not want it. Take him home — place him in the most sacred spot; give him your dearest place in your local temples. But for God's sake, don't again start this spirit out of which the terrible troubles of the past arose."

Lee was, in Heyburn's mind, "an example that cost hundreds of thousands of lives and thousands of millions of dollars."

Heyburn was nothing if not consistent in his demands. Heyburn interrupted once a band playing "Dixie" at a rally, yelling "This is a Republican meeting. We want no such tunes here" and effectively shutting down the gathering. He argued that the images of the Confederate flag shouldn't even be allowed on U.S. mail. And Heyburn introduced a resolution empowering the Secretary of the Treasury to question why the Newport News, Virginia, customs house was scheduled to close the next day on Robert E. Lee's birthday. He cited a newspaper article that asked why a public office would be closed for something that wasn't a federal holiday (it was a state holiday) and especially any birthday of a Confederate officer. And he followed that in July 1911 with a spirited rejection of a measure to fund a monument to the Confederate navy in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

He was quintessentially hard to debate and rather hard to like, said even his Republican colleagues. "He shall be known as the Great Reconciler," quipped one journalist sarcastically. Southern newspapers (and some Northern ones) derided him as the "last of the dodos" and his anti-Confederate speeches as braying or yelping, and they charged that Heyburn was little more than a biased blowhard who was reigniting extinct sectional tensions and torching national reconciliation. This despite the fact that white Southerners and groups such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy were busy literally building the Lost Cause narrative of the regional victimization and black disenfranchisement on the American landscape with monuments from Richmond to Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Although Heyburn was the sole vote against the resolution to allocate federal funds for the Confederate reunion tents, he was not alone in his concerns that sending a Confederate – even a long-dead one made of bronze and stone – to the Capitol was heralding the side that began the Civil War. Kansas' Congressional delegation threatened to submit a statue of John Brown, the slain anti-slavery radical who tried to siege Harper's Ferry, if Lee literally got a pedestal on the Capitol grounds, an idea that had been the source of political squabbles since Senator John Ingalls suggested it in the 1880s.

Dozens of chapters of the Grand Army of the Republic— a fraternal order of Union veterans — complained about the Lee statue throughout the spring of 1910; one Massachusetts post sent a resolution that "it would be an insult to the memory of the men who gave their lives for this country, and the Union veterans who survived the war, and who cherish a love for the flag they fought under, to place the statue of Robert E. Lee, in the full uniform of a rebel general, in the Hal of Fame."

However loud the objections, Lee's statue remained. Today, Statuary Hall itself is a room just south of the Capitol Rotunda on the spot of the old hall of the House. Lee stood there until 2008, when it was moved to the Crypt, a room beneath the Rotunda, which despite its ghoulish name, is a major stop on visitor tours. The Lee statue is still a part of the National Statuary Hall Collection, along with 99 other prominent Americans including presidents, actor Will Rogers, the 17th -century Pueblo Indian leader Po'Pay. Other Confederates in the collection include: Jefferson Davis (Mississippi), Alexander Stephens (Georgia), and 10 others. There are no African-Americans represented in the National Statuary Hall Collection, though a statue of Rosa Parks — not an official part of the collection because it wasn't submitted by a state — now stands where the Lee statue once stood.

Heyburn's intense speeches and opposition may have done him in. He collapsed during a speech on the Senate floor in 1912 due to a heart condition, and never returned to health or his office.

Senate colleagues toasted the deceased Heyburn in March 1913, continually referencing his bulldog tenacity. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts cited the fearlessness of Heyburn's Quaker ancestors — not retiring, quiet pacifists — saying, "You might question his opinion. But you could never doubt his courage."

Only one Southerner, Democratic Senator John Thornton of Louisiana, chimed in with a remembrance, and a carefully worded one at that. Thornton came to the Capitol holding the widely shared opinion that Heyburn had an axe to grind against the South. In his remarks, he recalled that the Idaho politician was "not a hater of the Southern people," but was merely emphatic about not plumbing government coffers to valorize men of the Confederacy.

"He always objected to the expenditure of public money to commemorate in any way the valor of Confederate soldiers and sailors, and even to the return of captured bonds that had been issued during the Civil War by any of the states opposing the Southern Confederacy. And this is why he acquired the reputation of being hostile to the South, a reputation that has outlived his life. ... And now that he is dead, I am glad to be able to pay tribute to some of the characteristics of Sen. Heyburn that I unreservedly admired," he ended in a decidedly middle-of-the-road eulogy.

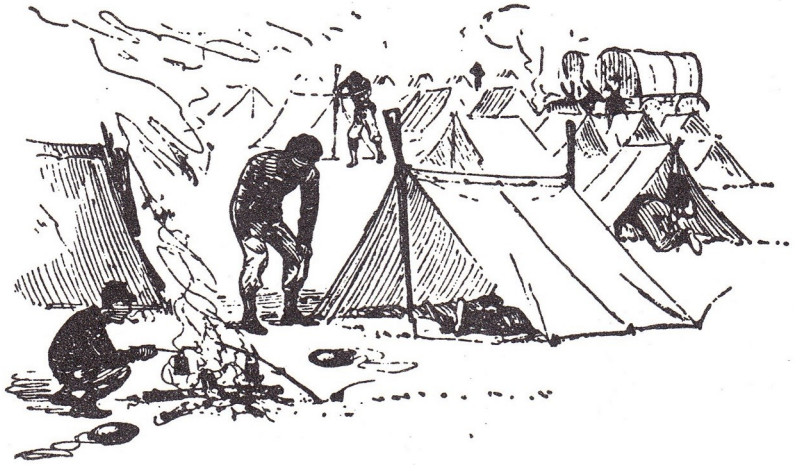
Amid today's monument controversies—including the forcible tearing down of such a statue in Durham, North Carolina, this summer—there are increasing calls to reconsider the inclusion of Confederates in Statuary Hall and what stories the "hall of heroes" tells in its carvings. Like all statues in the collection, the Robert E. Lee sculpture was commissioned by a state and would have to be replaced by that same state, Virginia, after approval by its governor and legislature.

Such a move would also force a reconsideration of what historical figures we consider worthy of memorializing—a point that Virginia Senator Tim Kaine, the 2016 Democratic vice presidential candidate, made this August in comments on CBS' political talk show, "Face the Nation."

"You get to pick two people to represent the entire scope of your state. Virginia has George Washington; that's an obvious one. But since 1909, number two is Robert E. Lee," said Kaine. "I think a state with Pocahontas, a state with Doug Wilder (the grandson of a slave, Korean War-decorated combat veteran, first elected African-American governor [in the nation]) — in 2017, is it really Robert E. Lee that we would say is the person who we want to stand for who Virginia is? I'm not sure it is."

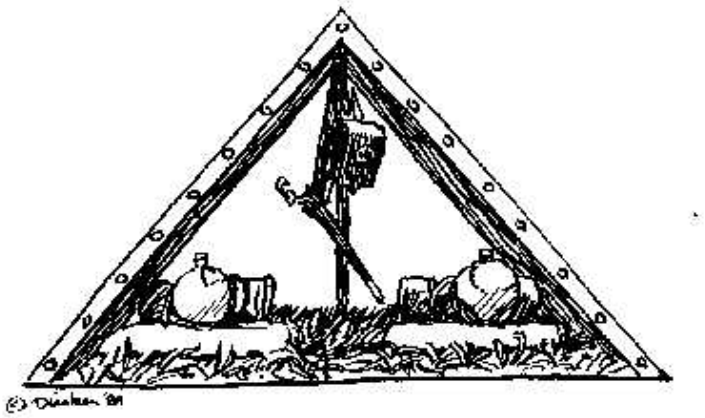
Rice C. Bull

Rice Bull served in the 123 New York Infantry and kept a diary of his experiences during the war and wrote his memoirs after the war. This excerpt is about the infamous "dog tents" and how they were used in at least this one instance.



THE DOG OR SHELTER TENT.

As soon as our company streets were laid out by our officers each man was issued a tent cloth, and with these strips of cloth were directed to construct shelter tents; "dog tents" was the name given them. Usually three men would occupy a tent as the three cloths could be so arranged as to enclose, when finished, the three sides of a tent, in which they could lie. These tents were to be used chiefly for sleeping, as one could barely sit erect at the highest place in the center. They were far from comfortable living quarters. Yet they were the only kind of shelter we would have in the field during our term of service. For three years this thin cloth tent would be our cover from wind, storm and cold. The tents were kept erect by driving a stake at each end, the stakes extending about three feet above the ground, and about six feet apart. They were connected at the top by a light pole over which was placed two of the tent cloths, buttoned together and stretched as much as possible at the sides. The third cloth covered the back of the tent. The head of our bed was at the back where we used our knapsacks for pillows. For our beds we would first spread our blanket, for covering we used two other blankets. In fair weather we stacked our guns in the street but when it was stormy took them into the tent to keep them dry. When the weather was dry and warm our tents were comfortable sleeping quarters but in wet, cold times they were anything but satisfactory. They would shed rain when it came gently but if the storm was heavy the rain would come through, at first like damp mist and when the cloth was well soaked would run through in big drops like a leaking roof. In rainy weather we had either to stand out and take it full force or lie in our tents. As soldiers we had to get used to anything, discomfort, food, clothing and shelter, and we soon became used to the little tents and were thankful to have them. Experience taught us to always trench around our tents if we were to use them for any length of time, so we would not be flooded out in case of a storm.



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.

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