



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 250

October 2017

On This Date-155 Years Ago

October, 1862

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.

1. One-third of the soldiers who fought for the Union Army were immigrants, and nearly one in 10 was African American.

The Union Army was a multicultural force—even a multinational one. We often hear about Irish soldiers (7.5% of the army), but the Union's ranks included even more Germans (10 %), who marched off in regiments such as the Steuben Volunteers. Other immigrant soldiers were French, Italian, Polish, English and Scottish. In fact, one in four regiments contained a majority of foreigners. Blacks were permitted to join the Union Army in 1863, and some scholars believe this infusion of soldiers may have turned the tide of the war.

2. Black Union soldiers refused their salaries for 18 months to protest being paid lower wages than white soldiers. When black soldiers began signing up with the Union Army in early 1863, they were paid \$10 a month. White soldiers were paid \$13, with officers earning more. Blacks were further insulted when only they were charged a \$3 monthly fee for clothing, lowering their pay to \$7. As a result, the highest-paid black soldier earned about half the lowest-paid white soldier's salary. To protest these conditions, black regiments refused to accept their inferior wages. Finally, pressure from abolitionist congressmen coupled with the courage black soldiers had shown in combat persuaded Congress to rectify the pay structure. In September 1864, black soldiers finally received equal pay that was retroactive to their enlistment date. For many, this meant they finally had enough money to send some home to their families.

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.



Next Meeting

October 28, 2017 11:00am

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



Battery Profile

Adolph Appitz

If Adolph would have known what was waiting for him in the Army, he may not have been so eager to enlist as the Second Minnesota Battery was forming in January of 1862. He had been born in the Kingdom of Prussia and eventually made his way to the new frontier of central Minnesota. Adolph was working as a blacksmith in St. Cloud, Stearns County, when he decided to join the army.

The descriptive role showed him to be 5' 8 1/4" tall, with gray eyes, light hair and a light complexion. He was 41 years old and married. His wife's name was Doris.

Adolph served as a private in the Battery and decided he was not willing to reenlist when his three years were up. While the men who had reenlisted went home to Minnesota for a veteran's furlough, Adolph, with other men who chose not to reenlist, served on detached duty with the Second Illinois Battery, Company I. With that unit, Adolph was a part of Sherman's army trying to take the Southern city of Atlanta, Georgia. Adolph, though, did not live to see the city fall. He was admitted to a field hospital where he was treated for "disease." Army records conflict as to what may have been troubling Adolph. The surgeon of the 14th Michigan called the disease that killed Adolph "Acute Pneumonia." The assistant surgeon of the army decided it was "Rheumatism" that took Adolph's life. Pension records filed by Adolph's wife, Doris, suggest yet another cause of death--the bite of a scorpion. While none agreed on the cause, Adolph died on August 9th, 1864, in the field hospital before Atlanta, Georgia.

Captain Hotchkiss, commanding officer of the Second Minnesota Battery, settled Adolph's affairs. Adolph had been last paid on December 31, 1863, and had pay due until the date of his death, some seven months of pay. However, Adolph had drawn clothing from the quartermaster for which he owed \$29.39 and an additional \$2.30 for a tent shelter half. Adolph did not owe the sutler or laundress anything. Doris was owed about \$60 in Adolph's back pay. Also, Adolph had enlisted at a time when he was promised a bounty of \$100. Records do not indicate he received any of this money, so Doris should have also received that as well, less any bounty money Adolph had received. It is unknown if she actually received any of the money.

Doris applied for Adolph's pension as his widow. It took two years to get the application approved, that approval coming in August of 1866, and she was awarded \$8.00 a month.

Adolph's body was not returned to Minnesota. His first burial place is unknown, but with the establishment of National Cemeteries, Adolph was reinterred in the Marietta National Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia. Since his death came while serving on detached service with the Illinois Battery, Adolph's grave marker does not list the Second Battery as his unit. It simply reads, "Minnesota."



St. Cloud Democrat

Saint Cloud, Stearns County, Minnesota

The following letter appeared in the November 6, 1862, edition, but was written just after the Battle at Perryville, Kentucky. Transcribed by Keith & Elaine Hedlund. Keith is a descendant of Lt. Alexander Kinkead, original member of the Second Battery.

THE SECOND MINNESOTA BATTERY AT THE BATTLE OF PERRYVILLE.

**The previous maneuvering of
Buell's army.**

The Battle of Perrysville.

**Efficiency of the Battery.
Bravery of the St. Cloud Boys.**

**Highly complimented by the
Commanding Generals.**

**Dissatisfaction felt at Buell's
failure to make the Victory of
benefit.**

The Wounded of the Battery.

[The following private letter, received by W. B. Mitchel, of this place, from Lieut. Alex. Kinkead, of the Second Minn. Battery, gives so vivid and interesting an account of the part taken by the Battery in battle of Perrysville, that we cannot forbear laying it before our readers.]

CAMP NEAR PERRYVILLE, KENTUCKY, Oct. 9th, 1862.

DEAR FRIEND. I had intended to keep you posted as to the movements of that portion of the Grand Army of the Union of which we are a part but after quitting Murfreesboro, Tenn., our marches were so arduous and my time so occupied that I could not write. Suffice to say that with all our forced marching we failed to bag Bragg's Army or even bring on engagement. Our whole force, to the number of seventy thousand men, were marched into Louisville, much to the satisfaction of the inhabitants who were seriously alarmed at the near approach of Bragg. There were not less than fifty thousand troops in Louisville before our grand entrée. Though no General, I would, were it safe to do so, give such an expose of military incompetency as would surprise you.

On the morning of the 4th of October the different Divisions of the Army of the Ohio moved out of the city by different avenues, presenting a splendid array of national greatness and "with all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war." As usual, for weeks past, we made forced marches and overtook the retreating forces under Gen. Bragg just beyond Bardstown. For two days our front harassed the enemy's rear, until Perrysville was reached where from necessity the enemy formed in line of battle extending over five miles of country. On the afternoon of Tuesday, the 7th of October we formed in line of battle corresponding to that of the enemy, our (Mitchell's) Division occupying a position in the center and on to the extreme advance. We formed in Battery on a hill from which with a glass the enemy could be distantly seen. Our orders from Gen. Buell who was near us with his staff, was to not bring on an engagement that day. The next morning one section of our battery under Lieut. Woodbury was ordered to advance upon the immediate control of Gen. Gay, Chief of Cavalry. Our captain accompanied the section and took position about one and half miles in advance of the main lines. We opened with the howitzers throwing shells, and drove the enemy's skirmishers and scouts back upon their lines; other sections from other batteries, occupying different points, operating at the same time and under the fire of which the cavalry advanced cautiously. We had a fine position for the howitzers and the sights of the time was grand. We shelled the enemy's advance for two and a half hours and with such accuracy that one of Gen. Buell's staff rode up and complimented the men very highly

upon the rapidity and correctness of their shooting. The cavalry near wanted to know if we were not regulars. Indeed we were all surprised and delighted. Our shot fell with telling effect upon the rebels and I was especially pleased with the coolness and courage of both officers and men. We had never been in action and as some of the men were new recruits I felt a little nervous lest want of faith in themselves might not operate to our disadvantage – one half hour dispelled all such thoughts.

The fight was as yet conducted entirely by the artillery and as the enemy retired the artillery moved forward until at last the rebel horde could be seen in line and with artillery in view to the naked eye – indeed, but for the woods, all this might have been seen much sooner. Almost immediately after taking the second position the rebels opened with their artillery, and had it been as well served as ours half our men would now sleep the sleep that knows no waking. They fired wildly, while with the same determined coolness our men handled their howitzers – now knocking a rebel gun from position – now sending rebels to their long account. At noon on the eighth the fight grew hot, but as yet the artillery alone had participated and with so splendid success that Gen. Gay rode in person to cheer the men and to speak complimentary words. "Men," said he, "I never saw such shooting." Here let me say that with those howitzers were St. Cloud men who did their duty like men – like soldiers – fresh as they were from their citizens' homes. All praise to David Jarvis, the Bloomfields, Will Kinkead and, indeed, all.

At this time, 2 P. M., the rebels were suffering severely and

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had as yet done us no significant damage. They could stand it no longer. Like rats driven into the corner they must fight. And fight they did. What they lacked in courage, whisky and gun powder did for them. One main line had been moved forward, throwing our howitzers into Roseau's Division with the other two sections on the right of that Division under Mitchell.

And now the storm commenced. Some of the enemy's best regiments under Hardee, broke impetuously from their cover and for three hours we (?) sanguinary a conflict as has occurred as yet in this war was enacted for the numbers engaged – say twenty thousand. Fifty thousand men in reserve never fired a gun – Why? Echo answers, "Why?"

The second Tennessee Regiment charged our guns like devils incarnate, as they were; what else could man be in battle inflamed with whisky and gunpowder? On, on, they came to within five rods; our guns throwing the canister and doing fearful execution. Now came the order for the infantry to advance – Kentucky and Michigan troops – which they did in good style, but on firing the first volley, the Michigan troops broke; the enemy still advancing and making fearful work amongst the Kentucky troops who stood their ground on the left of me. It was with difficulty our howitzers were saved. The fighting on that part the field was terrific. Our troops suffered severely and at nightfall were in possession of that ground where in the afternoon our howitzers stood. While all this was going on our other two sections were doing splendid work under Carlin and Mitchell, both of whom, as did Gen. Gay, complimented our men on their bravery and good shooting. On

that part the field the enemy's line was broken and retired in disorder. Why this success was not followed up is more than I can tell. Why Bragg's whole army was not completely routed – why the enemy was allowed to retreat in the night I cannot say. Certain it is, the fight is barren of resolve. The enemy no doubt suffered more than we, as the number of wounded now in our hands show, and by the dead left on the field. We took but few prisoners; but with the exception of keeping the enemy on the move and busting him out the State, nothing was gained. Our Battery shelled the enemy next morning after the fight – their rear guard – and our men were the first to enter the village of Perryville. Our troops acted well, except in the single instance of a Michigan Regiment before named. You will get full accounts of the fight from Official sources, and I am not afraid that Minnesota will not be proud of the 2d Battery. We had four wounded. That so many escaped is to me a miracle. I can only account for it is this way – the enemy hot over us. Certainly, their artillery practice was not good.

You never saw a battle field, and ought never wish to. It's horrible. The groans of the dying; the mutilated dead; the butchery of the surgeons fills me with dread. After the battle I visited that portion of the field occupied by the enemy in the morning and in range of our guns. We killed many with our artillery and injured much property. A great many sheep and cattle were killed. The enemy in their flight left all their wounded and buried but few of their dead. You can imagine our feelings – one portion of the battery knew nothing of the other until next morning after the battle.

LATER Oct. 10th – I have had no opportunity to mail the

above until now. Since writing the above we have had our battery in action twice – shelling the enemy's rear guard with success – none of our men injured. The wounded in the Perryville fight are, James Hunter, Faribault (dangerously); George Tilton, Anoka; Tennis Hanson, Winona; Daniel Fry, Anoka.

In Haste, ALEX.

P.S. – I learn from Rebel sources that the celebrated Washington Battery was one of the Rebel Batteries that was opposed to us, and also the Louisiana "Wild Cats".



Brothers Alexander and William Kinkead. Alex wrote the letter reprinted here. It is believed Alex is on the left in the photo. Original photo is from the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Recap

September 23-24 Pilot Knob, Missouri

19 Battery members and 3 guests traveled to Missouri to participate in this event held on the original ground of the battle. It is believed this is the largest attendance of our members at a national event.



Yes, we went south, but really?! 90+ every day?! It was very warm and humid, so keeping everyone cool and hydrated was a priority. On the good side, it cooled off at night and sleeping was relatively comfortable. Despite the heat, a great time was had by all.

Instead of portraying the Second Minnesota, we “galvanized” and were Confederate Missouri Irregulars. Oh, were our boys irregular! Uniforms were anything but uniform and almost everything went. It was marvelous fun. Our camp was in a grove of trees with shade for most of the day. The Union camp was in the blazing sun, so we felt we had a great place and made new friends in the camps around us.

The Confederate artillery commander must have had a thing for ripple fire and the line of nine guns fired in sequence several times each day to the delight of the crowd. A fair amount of time was independent fire, so a good many rounds were spent.

Our friends in Battery I were short on their gun crew, so several of our members kept their Union blue and served on Battery I's gun.



kept everyone busy.

Attendees agreed it was a fun trip at a wonderful historic site!



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

Ken Cunningham
1170 Golf Ridge Circle
Red Wing, MN 55066

Phone: (651) 388-2945

Treasurer

Daryl Duden
1210 West 4th Street
Red Wing, MN 55066

Phone: (651) 388-6520

Twin Cities Metro Area Contact

Ron & Vickie Wendel
12419 Redwood Street NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Phone: (763) 754-2476

E-mail: momwendel@hotmail.com

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

