



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 262

November 2018

On This Date-155 Years Ago

Morning Reports from the Battery
Remarks for the Month of November, 1863
(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

- 1 Geo. C. Townsend on Detached Service with Capt. Hotchkiss as Orderly
- 3 Sergt Ayer on Detached Service with Capt. Hotchkiss -- Clerk
- 4 Lt. Harder on Leave of Absence by S. F. O. 282 Maj. Gen. Thomas Privts: Jackins, J. W. Johnson & Norris Sent to Hosp. Chattanooga Lt. Kinkead reported absent without leave - Leave of 20 Days having expired Lt. Wheeler not on this Report since Oct 17" by mistake
- 7 Privts: Beckwith, Hains, French, Milds, Wheeler, Benfield - 78" Ills; Young, Konkle, Patch, Neville - 121" Ohio; Flaharda, Scureiman, Wales, White, Lake, Riordan - 113" Ohio; Pennock, OBrien, Moors, Knapp, Baker, Nevin 98" Ohio Vol. Inf. Detailed and reported for Duty
- 8 Privts: Diehl, 113" O.; Peak 121" O.; Stanley 78" Ill. V. I. reported for Duty. Privt Wales 115" O. relieved
- 11 Rec'd Pay for 4 mos. to Oct. 31 by E. A. Touax
- 13 Lt. H. L. Wheeler relieved from Duty here by S. F. O. 302 Dept Cumb. Artificer McKinney sent to Hosp.
- 15 Lt. H. W. Harder's Leave of Absence expired.
- 17 In Action this A.M. at 6 1/2 o'clock -- 20 minutes -- rebels attacked us with 6 guns --
- 18 Corp Barber, Privts: Babcock, Fletcher, Baker, Apple, Goodeil, Wheller, Zimmer - 34' Ill V. I., -- Privts: Blan & McAffry 78" Ill V I
- 19 Privts: Sheffen, Yalinius, Faeth, Chott, Gulgerberger 108" Ohio V. I. detailed for duty have reported.
- 23 Privt John Lebreck 121" Ohio Detailed & reported for duty in place of {left blank} ret'd to his Regt.
- 24 The right section of the Bttery crossed the river and joined our division in line of battle in command of Lieut. Dawley
- 26 At 2 A.M. the left section of the Battery crossed the river to join the division under the command of Lieut McKrugh 2d Wis Baty. the right section returned to camp. No. of men absnt with the battery - Sergt. 1, Corp. 3 Privates 28 - total 32
- 28 Sergt C. N. Earl received and accepted commission as 2d Lieut. in Baty from the Gov. of Minnesota and put on duty as such by the com'd'g Officer.
- 29 One horse died of disease
- 30 Notice rec'd from Ira Moran Comd. post Fort Snelling that E. T. Tillotson (who had been dropped as a Deserter) reported at Fort Snelling -- having been paroled & exchanged. -- August 11" 1863

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 10:00 to unload the gun and be ready for the program that starts at 11:11 am.

Congratulations!

We have a new future artilleryman! This sweet little bundle belongs to Steven and Susan Scurek. He's a good reason why we have not seen much of the Scureks as of late!



Next Meeting

December 1, 2018 11:00am

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



Battery Profile

Henry W. Towle

Henry was one of the first men to enlist in what would become the Second Battery. He was mustered into the army on December 7, 1861, a full three months before the Battery was accepted into U.S. service. Henry was a blacksmith, something the Battery would have had need of, though nothing in his records indicated he worked as such for the artillery. He was 23 years old, 5' 7-1/2" tall, with hazel eyes, light hair, and a light complexion. His birth was December 29, 1837, in Kennebec County, Maine. He was living in Dayton, Minnesota, in 1861, just across the river from Anoka where so many of the Battery men eventually came from. Henry was one of the first. He was single when he enlisted, but that changed before the Battery ever went south. Henry married Elvira J. Sturdevant in St. Anthony on March 19, 1862. Two days later, the Battery was accepted into the service of the government.

It may be that Henry did not go south with the Battery when they set out in May. On the Battery's roll for May and June of 1862, Henry was listed "absent on sick furlough in Minn." The first time he was reported present with the Battery on the August 31st roll of that year.

Henry did well as a soldier and was promoted to corporal on February 16, 1863. When the Battery veteranized in March of 1864, Henry reenlisted. He received a veteran's furlough and bounty. Not long after reporting back to the south, Henry was sick again. This time he was sent to the hospital in Chattanooga where he spent the months of July and August, 1864. The reason given for Henry's hospitalization was "scurvy" and it was noted he was suffering from ulcers at the time.

What happened in September is unknown, but Henry lost his corporal stripes, reduced back to the ranks. The Battery's order book simply stated that his demotion was to date from September 1, 1864, by order of Captain Hotchkiss. It had been Hotchkiss who had signed the order promoting Henry a year and a half earlier. No reason was given for the demotion.

Henry was mustered out of the army at Fort Snelling at the end of the war and he went back to his wife and baby daughter. Addie was born in Dayton on September 18, 1863, while Henry was gone. The couple eventually had six children between 1863 and 1878, all of them born in Dayton, Minnesota.

In the 1890's, Henry and Elvira moved to the community of Foreston in Mille Lacs County. Henry was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic post there and took an "active" role in it.

On the night of October 21, 1905, Henry went to bed feeling fine. Sometime during the night, his wife woke up and noticed that "he was breathing very laboriously" and she tried to help him sit up in bed. "She then discovered that his end was near at hand, and despite all efforts to restore him to consciousness, he passed away at about 4:00 a.m."

The local newspaper said Henry had been troubled with a stomach ailment for several years and blamed his death on that, but his death certificate disagreed. According to the death certificate, Henry had been suffering with heart trouble for 13 years before it took his life.

Henry was buried in the Princeton Oak Knoll Cemetery with an elegant family stone. Elvira's name was added to it, assuring her of a place beside Henry.

At the time of his death, Henry was still noted as a blacksmith, a trade he had never parted from. His possessions were few, and the house he left to Elvira was valued at \$108.



An Artilleryman's Diary

It is always interesting and very educational for reenactors to read the actual words written as the men who fought in the war served. Their experiences and thoughts reach across the decades and provide a glimpse of what life really was like for the men who served in the war we portray.

The following is an excerpt from the Civil War diary of Albert Underwood of Annapolis, Park County, Indiana. He was a member of the 9th Indiana Light Artillery. Note that he mentions the Second Illinois, the unit some of our Second Battery men served with when our Battery veteranized. The entire diary covers the period of the war from January 1, 1864 thru January 11, 1865.

Dec. 15, 1864: The artillery fighting today was very heavy for several hours and the infantry firing was very heavy in the charge on their first works. The 2nd works was taken in a charge but the enemy got off and took their artillery with them. 33 pieces and 1500 were captured today.

Dec. 16, 1864: We advanced our lines early this morning and commenced shelling their works with our battery, the 3rd Indiana, and the 2nd Illinois. The enemy had their batteries behind good fortifications. We kept up such heavy fire on them that they could not use their guns at times, but lay close behind their works. We ceased firing while the infantry were charging and they opened a heavy galling fire till our men got close to their works, scaled the wall and took their artillery and then swung the right and soon captured lot of prisoners. I stood on a high point and could see the whole thing. It was a grand scene indeed.

Dec. 17, 1864: It rained last night and is very disagreeable. We went over the battle ground this morning and hauled off a lot of artillery and caissons. a lot of ammunition wagons scattered over the ground. Some had stuck in the mud, some had run against trees, others had their horses shot down and had cut loose and left.

Dec. 24, 1864: We are at Buck River this morning, waiting for the 4th Corps train to get across out of our way. The Rebs have dumped some of their artillery in the river here in their hurried retreat. It has been a very disagreeable time since we started in pursuit of Hood. 3 pieces of artillery, a rodman, a 10 lb. Parrott, and a 12 lb. Howitzer were hauled out of the river this morning.

Dec. 25, 1864: We laid over today.

Jan. 01, 1865: Left camp at 7 1/2 oclock. Had very rough roads till we came to the pike and then we had some smooth roads. Clear most of the day, cold and the ground frozen in the morning, but it thawed a little today. We marched about 17 miles and went into camp at 4 oclock today in about 1 mile of Waynesburg, county seat of Wayne county.

Jan 02, 1865: Left camp about 8 1/4 oclock. Nice day. Had good roads all day. The road run for several miles down Eagle Creek. A large amount of (??) run along the road. We reached Clifton at 4 oclock and camped for the night. Marched 16 miles. A lot of boats here, town nearly all burnt.

Jan. 03, 1865: Rained last night. Loaded about 8 oclock. The 1st and 2nd Brigades of the 2nd Division loaded on boats and we started up the river at 3 oclock. Our battery is on the barge RAPIDAN and the 2nd Illinois on the barge PEERLESS and both towed by the N. Y. Bigley. We tied up 20 miles up the river.

Jan. 04, 1865: Waited this morning for more boats to come up. We remained here all day in about 12 miles of Savannah. Read the Snow Flake. The boats came up at 9 oclock tonight and we moved out soon after and run till about 3 oclock. Clear and beautiful day.

Jan 05, 1865: We passed Crump's Landing just after daylight and Pittsburg Landing soon after. Run quite slow. The HUNTSMAN fired into one of the 89th boys wounded (?). Tied up at Chichasaw Landing, Alabama, and lay up till morning. Rained a little this evening.

Jan. 06, 1865: Raining and very disagreeable today. Remained here all day. Snowed a little this evening.

Jan. 07, 1865: We moved down to Eastport this morning and unloaded and went into camp in the old town of Eastport. Fine day. We are quartered in a house close to our battery. 3 or 4 families are living in here now.

Jan. 08, 1865: Nothing of interest today. I am on guard today. The Alabama line on this side of the river is a few hundred yards from here. Bear Creek is the line.

Jan. 09, 1865: Raining this morning and continued all day. It has been very disagreeable today. Our brigade is building winter quarters here.

Jan. 10, 1865: Raining yet this morning and continued all day. Quite disagreeable.

Jan. 11, 1865: Nice morning. I went outside the pickets today in charge of team and squad and got a load of lumber and have fitted up quarters nice here for our mess.

Recap

Oct 20-21, Minooka, IL Dollinger Family Farm Civil War Reenactment

This was quite possibly one of the coldest events Battery members have ever attended! The temperature on Sunday morning was a whopping 24 degrees! Saturday's battle was fought

in a terrific wind with SNOW pelting the reenactors and the very few brave spectators. Sunday was still quite cold, but at least the sun came out and the wind dropped at a few MPH. Eleven members made the long drive, including Papa John Fritche from the New Ulm Battery. The event was the last at this site due to development coming, but was well attended with some 600 reenactors. The meal served on Saturday evening was outstanding—baked potato, barbeque pork chops, beans, bread,

and pie. Plans are being discussed about moving the event to another site to continue it. Despite the cold, a good time was had by all!



Forgetting to empty the dish water was not a good idea when it was this cold!



It was Cameron's birthday, so we had to celebrate with cupcakes!

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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