

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 265

March 2019

On This Date-155 Years Ago

From: <https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/the-american-civil-war/american-civil-war-march-1864/>

During March 1864, General Sherman finalized his plan to march on Atlanta.

March 1st: The cavalry raid on Richmond started to go badly wrong. Having ridden for 36 hours, both men and horses were exhausted. The Confederate defenders had known about the raid and had prepared accordingly. An experienced cavalry unit from Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia was brought in to Richmond and chased the Union cavalry force out of the city. By the time the raid formally ended, the Union had lost 340 men and 500 horses. It was a propaganda coup for the South and should have been a disaster for the North, but the raid was sold as a success as it concentrated on the dilapidated state of the Confederate capital – as witnessed by those on the raid.

March 2nd: Grant was formally promoted to lieutenant general and assumed the title General-in-Chief of the Army of the United States.

March 9th: Grant received his new command in a ceremony attended by the whole Cabinet. Many politicians expected him to work out of Washington. Therefore, there was much surprise when Grant announced that he was going to set up his command in the field with the Army of the Potomac. While a number of politicians in Washington had tried to get Lincoln to dismiss Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac, Grant expressed his full confidence in Meade’s leadership.

March 17th: Grant, observing a request from Halleck, relieved the general of his command and appointed him chief-of-staff. Grant announced that the Union’s military headquarters would be with the Army of the Potomac. Grant made the destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia his primary aim.

March 18th: Sherman was given formal command of the Military Division of the Mississippi.

March 27th: Sherman, in Vicksburg, was making hard and fast plans for his campaign against Atlanta. These included calling in Union troops from elsewhere such as A J Smith’s corps from Alexandria, Louisiana.

Upcoming Events

March 23 Boy in Blue Civil War Symposium, Mankato MN.

Attendees in uniform will not pay the entrance fee. Everyone who wishes to partake in the lunch provided must pay a \$5 fee. The symposium will last from 9:00am until 5:30pm. If you are planning to attend this event, please contact John Cain. Deadline for registration is March 18.

For more info: <http://>

www.boyinblue.org/2019_Symposium_poster.pdf



Did you get your dues paid?

If you have not already paid them, **dues for the next season are due**. There are no changes in our dues fee schedule, but members are asked to **PLEASE FILL OUT the form** that appears at the end of this newsletter. We need to keep our membership contact list up to date with your current email and phone number. We know these change—even snail mail addresses change—and we need to be able to reach our members.

Dues must be paid to remain a voting member.

Next Meeting

April 6, 2019 11:00am

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



Battery Profile

William Wolke

William was ten years old when his parents left their native Germany and traveled to the United States. They arrived in the U.S. in 1842 to begin their new life. They moved to Minnesota just as the western lands were open for settlement. William married Clara Honnack in Richmond, Stearns County, Minnesota, in 1855. Their first child was born in 1859, followed by the second one in 1862. They made their home in the community of Munson in Stearns County.

The Wolke home was on land that had been given up by the Dakota Indians in a treaty in 1851, but by 1862, the Federal Government was preoccupied with the Civil War and payments for the land were slow in coming to the Dakota. Many factors that year brought the problems to a head and the conflict began with the Dakota making war on the white settlers of western Minnesota. Many settlers fled east to larger cities for protection and it is believed William, Clara, and their two babies were among those who fled. The Wolke home was destroyed in the fighting and they lost all of their personal possessions.

The conflict was short lived and the settlers were slowly allowed back to their homes. What prompted William to enlist two years later is unknown, but the bounty offered may have been enticing after having lost so much. William joined the Second Battery September 2, 1864, from the draft rendezvous that summer. He was given one third of his promised \$100 bounty for enlisting to serve one year.

The descriptive roll showed William to have been born in Germany on November 25, 1832. He was a carpenter with hazel eyes, brown hair, dark complexion, and stood 5' 7-1/2" tall. He allowed his name to be credited to Hastings in Dakota County for the draft quota.

William and the other recruits caught up to the Battery at Chattanooga, Tennessee, where the Battery was assigned to garrison duty. It was the last year of the war and the Battery saw more battles with enemies such as the weather, disease, and boredom than Confederates. When spring came, the Battery moved to Philadelphia, Tennessee. It was there that William ran into trouble.

He explained what happened in June of 1865. William had been assigned to guard duty and had stood guard the 24 hours before an inspection was to be held. His clothing was "not in good shape for an inspection" and he had only a short time between his relief from guard duty and the beginning of the inspection. William was hurrying "so fast he got very warm," said Battery comrade Jacob Staples.

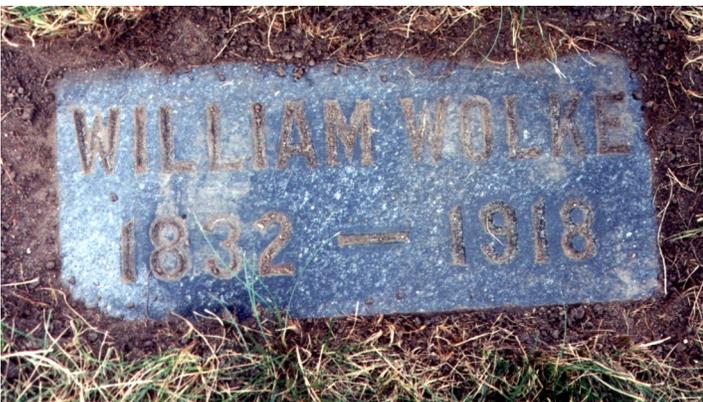
William wrote, "It was about 10 o'clock Sunday morning. The weather was very warm and dry. I had been standing in the ranks over half an hour. I became dizzy and everything appeared blurred and I fell forward. I remember nothing more for several days. When I recovered consciousness, I was in my tent."

Jacob Staples filled in some of the blanks. "William Wolke dropped in the ranks. He was immediately taken to a building used at that time as a hospital where a number who were injured a few days before in a railroad accident were confined...Sometime after inspection, I think the same day, I visited his quarters and found him lying in a stupor or unconscious state and the attendants said he was suffering from Sunstroke and they were using such restoratives as they thought good." Staples also noted that William was "quite a fleshy man at that time."

Another man in the Battery backed up William's story. He wrote that William's "head was very hot, he was unconscious for the first three days and talked very wild. I never thought he would get well."

William did get better, but said he struggled with his eyesight and headaches. He also said he could no longer tolerate heat or being out in the sun too long.

At the end of the war, the Battery went back to Fort Snelling and were mustered out on August 16, 1865. When William mustered out, his muster sheet noted that he had "pay due from enlistment." This meant he had not been paid since he enlisted the year before. William owed \$65.61 for clothing and \$6.00 for transportation from the past year as well. William did keep his haversack, knapsack, and canteen when he left the army as was allowed by special order.



On a pension form filled out in 1913, William listed the places he had lived since leaving the service. He listed St. Paul, Minnesota; Omaha, Nebraska; Fayette, North Dakota; and Snow, North Dakota. At the time of filing, he was a resident of Gorham, North Dakota. He signed the application by making his mark. William had never learned to write his name.

It is not known when, but William eventually made his way back to St. Paul. He was living there at the time of his death on December 5, 1918. He was buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Paul.

Dows, Iowa, Rest Stop on I-35

From the *Globe Gazette*, North Iowa News, Mason City, Iowa

Civil War facts and symbols are portrayed throughout the new Iowa Department of Transportation rest area at Dows. A Civil War theme, chosen because of the prominent role played by Franklin County residents in the Civil War, is evident in architectural elements and in the overall design concept.

"Franklin County had more people die per capita in the Civil War than any other county in Iowa," said Mark Masteller, chief DOT landscape architect. Visitors first notice the use of oversized black metal bullet post lights lining the sidewalks. The bullets are replicas of 58-caliber shells used during the Civil War.

Inside, a Union eagle and Northern Army crest in the terrazzo floor welcome visitors upon entering the main door. Blue and gray are used inside to show the division of the building into North and South. Overhead, a large chain across the span of the structure links the north and south walls, symbolically recalling the reunification of the North and the South after the war. The chain design is repeated down the middle of the sidewalks.



Contrasting Civil War facts relating to the Union or the Confederacy are featured on terra cotta blocks on north and south walls framing doorways to the rest areas. We learn that the South, for example, had 9,000 miles of railroad, \$37 million in gold and 1,140,000 men of combat age. The Union on the other hand, had 20,000 miles of railroad, 100,000 factories, 4 million men of combat age. The 78,095 Iowans who served in the war represented



the most per capita of any state, North or South.

Wall murals outside the restrooms on either side feature symbols of the Union and Confederate armies. One wall shows a Union cap with a gold "I" for Iowa on its face.

Outside the main door facing west a bullet lined sidewalk leads to a formal memorial plaza, complete with engraved tombstone-like monument in a central green area. Walkways around the plaza are punctuated here and there with additional monuments engraved with selections from actual letters of Iowa Civil War soldiers, Masteller said.

They talk about the food, of being homesick and their wish for the war to end.

A letter home from Private Joseph Bedford Evans, for example, states that he would be very glad to see peace made "if done on honorable terms." He says, however, that he is ready to "fight it through" if necessary. "I will try to live and fight for my country, so as not to dishonor it or any friends." Evans, we are told, was killed in action four days later.

"We try to pick something that not everybody knows about," said Masteller said of Iowa rest themes. "We try to educate travelers, give them a little information about the area they are traveling through."

The Civil War artwork was designed by Des Moines artist David B. Dahlquist as part of a multi-disciplinary team that included Yaggy Colby Associates of Mason City. The pieces were fabricated by the Dahlquist Clayworks and completed in November of 2003. The Sons of Union Veterans was so impressed with the rest stop, they held a dedication for it that included a Civil War re-enactment, Masteller said.

This was a fun find on the way south when the Wendel's thought it was simply a bathroom break! A plaque inside the rest stop provides the information that Franklin County was the home of the only Civil War Soldiers Memorial Hall built in Iowa, one of only three of its kind in the U.S. It stood in Hampton, Iowa, and was built in 1890. It memorializes the service of Iowa soldiers during the Civil War. The Hall still stands and is on the National Register. Might be time for another road trip!



Recap

Submitted by John Cain

February 16

Ken, Daryl, James and I made our way to Clear Lake, Wisconsin, to schmooze with Bernie and Bruce Paulson and tour the "shed" where the guns are stored.

Schmoozing took all of two hours (you can EASILY be caught up in the moment with these twins) and the actual tour took 30 minutes give or take. They had artillery on both sides of the shed along with a Mortar carriage, Casemate Flank Howitzer and supply wagon. We would have taken photos of the guns outside, but a foot of snow put the damper on that. Those outside are in the siege gun class and could be called behemoths.

These brothers have put their life's enjoyment into research of the hows, whys, and wheres of Civil War artillery and can identify a carriage bolt from Barbette to Field Carriage and tell you where they go. They have drawings, diagrams, and specifications for just about every piece of artillery produced at the time of the Civil War. We even learned why 100 lb. Parrotts were prone to burst over the smaller caliber guns. It had to do with the production (defects) of the ammunition used in those guns.

I think Ken and James were very impressed with the day. Daryl and I always like to learn more details. I can't say enough about the history these two are preserving. To the uninitiated, this is minutia. It goes along with the works of Michelangelo ---- Outstanding Work, but how many know what was in the paint!!



Top l-r: 10 lb Parrot model 1861 2.9"; 10 lb Parrot model 1863, 3"; Early model 12 lb Napoleon with James rifling system

Left: Model 1861 Rodman, 4.5", also called Ordinance Rifle. It is a reproduction in progress, but needs a bigger trailer!



Light Model 1857 12 lb Napoleon, also called a howitzer.



6 lb gun

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

Your Country Needs You!
And so does the Battery!

2019 dues are DUE !! To remain on the active member list, your dues are:

Civilian Member	\$12.00
Military Member	\$12.00
Associate Member	\$ 6.00
Junior Member (14-17)	\$ 6.00
Junior Member (under 14)	Free

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

e-mail address: _____

Please send this form and your check to:

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

Please do fill out the form completely and return it with your dues as email addresses and cell numbers change. We need an accurate contact list in case of last minute event changes or emergencies.

Thank you!