



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 267

May 2019

### On This Date-155 Years Ago

#### **Second Battery's Morning Reports May 1864**

(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

There are no reports for the first three weeks of May as the boys of the Battery were home on a 30 day furlough, earned for reenlisting. By the third week, they were due back at Fort Snelling to begin making their way South and a return to the war, so their morning reports began again.

23 Command reported at Ft. Snelling Minn, H. Dunn, Adam Eppinberger, Thos Robb, John Gutteridge, C. Martin, J. F. Spencer, recruits, rept'd for duty. John Ball 2d Lieut., commissioned May 10, 1864, and awaiting muster. Absent with leave.

25 Deserted: Ed. T. Tillotson

27 Arr'd at Chicago, Ills.

28 E. T. Tillotson arrested in Chicago Ills as deserter and having been placed, for safe keeping in charge of the Pro. Guard, was sent to the officer of that guard without the knowledge of Tillotson's com'd'g officer, to camp Douglas, from whence, when the command was ready to take the cars enroute for Chattanooga, T. there was not time to remove him (see remarks for July 30, 1864 of this report.)

30 Deserted: Charles Martin. Command Left Chicago, Ills. and arrived at Lafayette, Ind. at 3 p.m.

31 Arrived at New Albany, Ind.

### Upcoming Events

**May 4-5 Spring Valley VFW, Spring Valley, MN.** Encampment with learning stations on Saturday and parade on Sunday. This is in partnership with the Boys of '61. Details were sent via email to members. If you have questions, contact John Cain or Daryl Duden

**May 20 Avail Academy School. Edina, MN**  
4015 Inglewood Ave S, Edina, MN  
This is the school we know as Calvin Christian School. All that has changed is their name.  
**Arrive at 9:00** to set up, students arrive at 9:50.  
We will set up 5 stations and rotate students through. **BRING A BAG LUNCH!**

**May 27, Red Wing, MN Memorial Day**  
Arrive at Bay Point Park by 8:00 to set up. There will be a reading by one of our Battery members for the Memorial Day service and honor volleys from our gun. RSVP to Daryl Duden or John Cain.



### Next Meeting

**June 1, 2019 11:00am**

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



# Battery Profile

## Calvin Cowan

Calvin came into the war in the last year. He enlisted on August 18, 1864, at Taylor's Falls, Minnesota. He was paid a bounty of \$33.33, first payment on the \$100 he was promised if he would agree to serve one year. Calvin probably left at least some of this money with his bride, Elizabeth. They had been married less than a month earlier, July 15, 1864.

Calvin went to Fort Snelling to be mustered in and there he filled out the descriptive role saying he was 5' 11" tall, had brown eyes, black hair and a dark complexion. He had been born in Pike County, Illinois, and was 21 years old. His occupation was farming in Amador, Chisago County.

The choice of enlisting in the Second Battery might have been easier for Calvin. His brother-in-law, Charles Martin, had served in the Battery. Calvin and Charles did not serve together, however. Charles had decided he'd had enough of the army and deserted in April of 1864.

The Battery did not see much fighting in the last year of the war, instead doing many different jobs including herding cattle, guard and scout duty, and some garrison duty. In December, Calvin was among a group of men detailed to cut logs for the garrison and he did this until April of 1865. The war was over, but the Second Battery remained in the south until ordered home. In typical army fashion, the Battery was ordered to Knoxville to be mustered out, but when they got there, the order was countermanded. They were ordered back to Loudon.

The trip on back on June 18th was an eventful one. The train cars were heavily loaded with soldiers. As the train approached the bridge over the Holston River from the north on a high embankment, the coupling between the tender and the forward car broke. Three or four of the forward cars "pitched over the right side of the embankment, at the same time, Calvin C. Cowan and many others jumped to the left side to save from being crushed under the cars on the right," said Jacob Staples, a Battery comrade. "(I) was further to the rear of the train, inside of a box car, and jumped to the left side, the embankment not being so high, was not injured."

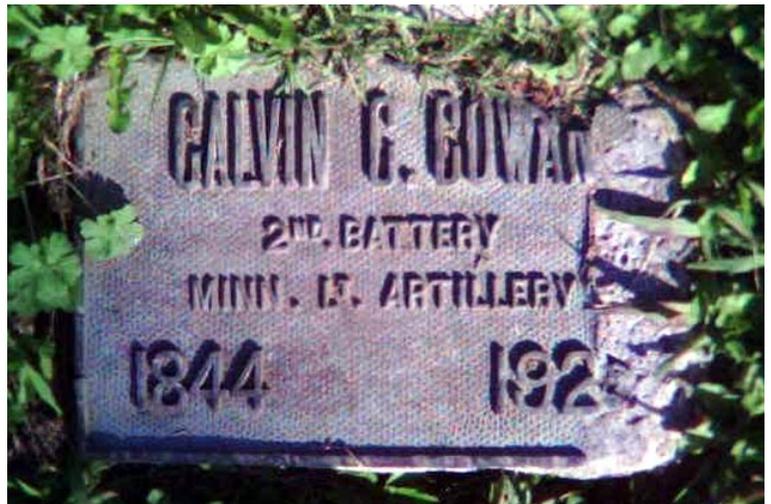
Calvin wrote about the accident and what he remembered of it. "I was sitting on top a box car with my legs hanging over and I heard the boys yelling and waving for us. I looked, and before I had time to act, the car I was on went over and I was thrown and I probably tried to jump, and as it was a high embankment, I think perhaps 60 feet, I seemed to strike on the end of a plank bridge built over the ditch along side the track. I struck with my left hip apparently. I was knocked senseless and knew nothing about it, but I gather from what the boys told me, that I was so struck. It skinned my left hip and back and a sliver seems to have run into my left knee and up into my leg some six or eight inches. The boys told me about this afterward, and said one had to pull it out while another held me." Calvin was taken by rail road car to Philadelphia, Tennessee, where he was treated in the hospital. Calvin was on crutches when he arrived back in Minnesota to be mustered out on August 16, 1865.

Elizabeth was waiting for him and in later years, she said he had gone to war a healthy, strong man, but he came home "a cripple". Elizabeth would have known as she grew up near Calvin and had known him since he was 13 years old.

Calvin and Elizabeth moved around a bit and they had several children. Not many years after the war, Calvin had to give up the farm they were living on as he could not work it. They took in boarders to make a living and Calvin had to use a cane to get around. For a while, they were living in St. Cloud, Minnesota, where Calvin sold wood. When this became too much for him, he took a job driving a team for the horse-drawn street cars in St. Cloud. By about 1880, Calvin was struggling with his health almost constantly and was using two canes.

Eventually, Calvin and Elizabeth moved to Oakland, California. In Oakland, Calvin joined the local GAR Post, # 88. It was known as the Lookout Mountain Post and he was an active member. Calvin and Elizabeth were not alone in California. Two of their children lived nearby as did Calvin's brother.

Calvin died on April 9, 1924, at the age of 79. He was laid to rest in the Mountain View



# King Cotton

From the blog, *Civil War Quilts* by Barbara Brackman

Terms like Cotton Famine and King Cotton are catchy phrases that were commonplace in Civil War discussions and still resonate today.

"King Cotton" was a basic platform of secessionism, a short hand term for Confederate foreign policy based on the illusion that the South without any real industry could win a war in the industrial age. English reporter William Howard Russell recorded an eve-of-war conversation at the attack on Fort Sumter with Fire-Eater Louis Wigfall of Texas who explained the Southern ideal of an agricultural aristocracy.: ...*"We are an agricultural people; we are a primitive but a civilized people. We have no cities — we don't want them. We have no literature — we don't need any yet. We have no press — we are glad of it... We want no manufactures: we desire no trading, no mechanical or manufacturing classes."*

Before the war, the Southern United States was the leading supplier of raw cotton to two industrial nations, Great Britain and the United States ---- the Northern states. Southern crops made up nearly 80% of Britain's pre-war raw cotton supplies.



Thomas Nast drawing of "King Cotton."

Jefferson Davis and Confederate leaders believed they held the key to winning the war in Britain's reliance on American cotton. King Cotton dictated that the Confederacy withhold cotton exports to English ports creating a Cotton Famine that would encourage Great Britain to side with the Confederacy. Former South Carolina governor James Henry Hammond summarized the principle: *"You dare not make war on cotton. No power on earth dares to make war upon it. Cotton is king!"*

We tend to think that Northern blockades interrupted cotton trade between Liverpool and Charleston and New Orleans, but the main impediment was Confederate policy forbidding exports. The cotton piled up on wharves and in warehouses where it was burned accidentally and deliberately or rotted away.

Both sides disrupted cotton trade as blockade runners defied Southern foreign policy as well as Northern ships.

English mill closings in the early 1860s were propagandized to be the results of successful Confederate planning.

Surely, the Queen

and Parliament would break their neutrality policy rather than see their workers starve. But in reality, cotton mills in Northern England suffered periodic swings between prosperity and poverty and the Confederate Cotton Famine had very little to do with the grievous situation in Lancaster. British cotton brokers and the mills began the Civil War years with a surplus of cotton in storage waiting for a market revival.

Britain remained neutral and bought their cotton in India. Realizing that cotton was not King, the Confederacy changed their policy to trade the commodity for English-built ships and weapons. By then English industry had recovered and the main source of their supply was India, which in 1865, was 85% of the English cotton. Confederate cotton farming did not recover. Cotton production in 1864 yielded 300,000 bales, down from four and a half million in 1861.

The real cotton famine was in New England, which supplied much of the American calico market.

Cotton goods continue to rise in price from diminishing stocks and a light production, and prices must continue to rise to a **cotton famine** level, for the price of raw cotton is getting to a height that will curtail the consumption materially. Fall-style prints are few, but old styles have taken more freely and will soon be exhausted. Brown and bleached goods have advanced considerably, and much has been bought on speculation. Drills

*Speculation about a cotton famine a few months after Fort Sumter in 1861.*



OVER THE WAY.

Mr. Bull. "OH! IF YOU TWO LIKE FIGHTING BETTER THAN BUSINESS, I SHALL DEAL AT THE OTHER SHOP."

*John Bull observing the fraternal quarrel in the American shop. If you two like fighting better than business, I shall deal at the other shop."*

*Note the Indian shop owner with a store full of bales across the street.*

**FROM THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND  
SWORD PRESENTATION  
Chickamauga, GA, April 12th, 1864**

*Editor Democrat: A very interesting scene took place at the camp of the 2nd Minnesota light artillery a few days ago. The non-commissioned officers and men of the Battery raised a voluntary subscription and purchased a sword, sash and belt to present to 1st Lieut. L. Dawley. The presentation took place at the quarters of the lieutenant and the following remarks were made in behalf of the company, by Rich'd. D. Bloomfield:*

*"1st LIEUT. RICHARD DAWLEY - it has become my agreeable duty, at the request of the non-commissioned officers and men of the 2nd Minnesota light artillery, to address and present to you on their behalf this gift as a token of their esteem and high appreciation of your character as a gentleman. In the long and various relations in which you have been connected with us, we have ever found you bearing the impress of those qualities which mark the true officer. In the hour of danger, of peril, of battle, your judgement, coolness and bravery have won our admiration and commanded our respect.*

*"As a patriot, ever ready in the hour of duty; as an officer, unremitting in those attentions which are conducive to our welfare; sharing alike with us the danger and glory of the battlefield, the fatigues, hardships and privations of the march, considerate and kind in the camp - we take this occasion as a fitting time to express our warmest thanks and extend to you the right hand of fellowship, with that true, manly, hearty honesty which is our pride as soldiers.*

*"And when it pleases God that this weapon shall be sheathed and we return to our homes we love so well and resume our peaceful avocations, may we look back through the window of memory upon this scene and its surroundings and again call to our hearts these pleasant reminiscences that speak to us of a brother soldier, a true patriot and an honorable man, whom we love, honor and respect. On behalf of my comrades I take you by the hand and with heartfelt feelings wish you a bright and successful future."*

*Lieut. Dawley responded warmly, and conveyed to the men very briefly his hearty thanks for this entirely unlooked-for honor. His remarks were short, owing to the unexpectedness of the gift and to his not being addicted to speech making, having yet to make his maiden effort in oratory. His remarks accorded so well with his well-known quiet and unassuming manner that the boys felt that which language failed to convey to them.*

*Immediately after the ceremonies the sword and its appurtenances with an engrossed copy of the address, were placed upon a table covered with a red artillery cloth and exhibited.*

*The sword is of elegant manufacture, chastely ornamented and is of the regular cavalry or artillery pattern. Upon the scabbard, which is of steel, are engraved, "Presented to 1st Lieut. R. L. Dawley, by the non-commissioned officers and men of the 2nd Minnesota Battery". Then follow the names of the different battles and skirmishes participated in by the Lieutenant during the present war. On the reverse of the scabbard is a list of the various battles in which he was engaged in Mexico, during the Mexican War. The committee are indebted to Lieut. Alex. Kinkead for the good taste and judgement shown in purchasing the gift and having an appropriate inscription engraved thereon.*

*You are probably aware the 2nd Battery is now a veteran Battery, and by reason of their re-enlistment will leave for the State on the 14th, and will probably arrive at*

*St. Paul on the 25th. They have already the order to leave and have been relieved by an Illinois Battery. Capt. Hotchkiss and Lieut. Harder will accompany the veterans to the State. We understand that Corp. Dan'l Fry, A.C. Gowdy, and R.D. Bloomfield of St. Cloud, will start for Minnesota in a few days on recruiting service. Chas. N. Earle, 2nd Lieut., resigned a few days ago and left for Minnesota. He is from Anoka.*

*The 2nd Minnesota Regiment passed here on the 9th of April, on their way to join their Division at Ringgold, GA, They left Nashville on the 25th of March and marched here in fourteen days. Many other regiments were also required to proceed from Nashville to the front on foot, in consequence of railroad transportation which is now taxed even beyond its capacity.*

*Everything is very quiet along our front.*

*This article appeared in a Minnesota newspaper. A copy of it was sent to members of the Reenacting Battery along with a copy of a photo of Lt. Dawley.*

**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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