



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 279

July 2020

On This Date-159 Years Ago

From the Civil War Washington Blogspot

Celebrating the 4th of July

The day began with artillery salutes fired at daybreak from batteries in and around the city and the tolling of church bells. Later in the morning, a parade of 20,000 New York soldiers marched down Pennsylvania Avenue and passed a Presidential reviewing stand. Such a martial parade had never been witnessed in Washington before. After brief remarks from the President and his Cabinet, an American flag was raised in Lafayette Square. Flags and banners decorated residences and camps throughout the city on a scale never seen before.

Regiments throughout the city held open houses in their camps with dress parades, concerts, speeches by home state dignitaries, readings of the Declaration of Independence and festive meals.

At noon, the 37th Congress convened in a special session called by President Lincoln to secure Congressional appropriations for the raising and equipping of a 400,000 man army. In his opening prayer, the Senate Chaplain observed that although "new disasters have befallen us and darkness broods in the land, [this Independence Day] was a day tenfold more precious by reason of our present troubles."

Although the Ordnance Department did not put on its normal fireworks show due to wartime exigencies, Union soldiers and private citizens filled the void through their own fireworks and artillery salutes throughout the evening.

Charles B. Hayden, a Michigan infantryman, wrote in his diary that "at night cannons were fired at the batteries and at the city and every camp had a bonfire ... the Potomac was lighted for miles by their blaze."

Next Meeting

July 25, 2020 11:00am

The meeting will be held OUTSIDE at Colvill Park in Red Wing and follow CDC guidance for social distancing. Hopefully, we will be in a picnic shelter. Members must BRING THEIR OWN CHAIRS. Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items. 651-388-2945.



Upcoming Events

We HAVE one!!!

Elba Winona County MN August 1

Brian Tomashek is the contact for this event. We have been invited back to Elba to provide a three round salute in their 2020 veteran ceremony. This year they will be honoring two veterans of WWII. There were enough volunteers at the last meeting for a gun crew, so the unit will attend. Timing for the event has not been finalized but a 10:30am – 11:00am start time has been suggested. It is believed that firing the three rounds will be the extent of our involvement, so little contact with the public.

Events NOT Upcoming

Shooters Round up, Ahlman's Gun Shop in Morristown, MN. The event is going on at this time, though with modifications. We were told the stage shows, trick shooters, and other special events within the Roundup were not happening to prevent people from gathering in crowds. While there is some confusion about if our cannon was included in the "events" that were canceled, discussion at the June meeting found little support for attending among our members. This event will remain OFF our calendar.

The **Flynn Family Gathering** our gun was invited to in September is also canceled. They are looking at rescheduling for next summer.

There has been no official announcement from either **Perryville, Kentucky, or Pilot Knob, Missouri**, about their events, further discussion indicated very little support for attending either of them in 2020. Both have been canceled on the Battery from the calendar.

Stay safe, stay hopeful, stay positive!

BONUS PAGES!

Bugler Bill supplied an interesting article on the making of the Lincoln Funeral Care replica. The pages are at the end of this newsletter. The article is from *The Anvil's Ring*, Vol 43, No.4, Fall 2015.

Battery Profile

This page had been featuring men with the surname of Johnson for the past three months. The last two Battery men named Johnson, Ever and James, were both featured in previous issues of the Acton Front, so you could have gotten a total of FIVE men with the surname of Johnson! Instead we are moving on to a man just recently located through ongoing research.

Cornelius F. Harder

Cornelius enlisted in Captain Caligan's Company of 101st Regiment of Ohio Infantry on August 7, 1862. He joined the regiment at Camp Monroeville on August 30. He was from Lyme, Ohio, and agreed to serve for three years. At the time he was mustered in, he was given \$27 from Captain E. Drake. What he may not have told the recruiting offers was that he was only recently released from prison. In 1860, Cornelius was serving time in the penitentiary at Jeffersonville, Indiana, for larceny.

The descriptive book of the 101st Ohio Infantry placed him in Company A. He was 39 years old, was a harness maker and had been born in Hudson, New York. He was 5' 8" tall, had hazel eyes, brown hair and a sandy complexion.

Cornelius served as a private with the infantry until December 26, 1862, when he was left at the convalescent camp in Nashville. By February 28, 1863, he was back with the regiment.

On March 1, 1863, Cornelius and a number of other men from the 101st Ohio Infantry were detailed to serve with the Second Minnesota Battery. Orders were not officially written until the 29th, but they were backdated to reflect the date the men joined the Battery. It was while serving in the Battery that Cornelius began to have trouble. By June, he was under arrest for drunkenness, absence without leave and stealing. He was delivered to the provost marshal on June 22.

Three charges were preferred against Cornelius. The first was a "Violation of No. 44, Articles of War" with the specification that he "did fail to report at the time fixed, to the place of drill; he not being Excused therefrom by any competent Authority."

The second charge was "Absence from Camp without leave. In this; that he, the said Cornelius F. Harder, Private Co. A 101" Reg't Ohio Vol. Inf. did, without permission from competent Authority, absent himself from the camp of his Company, and did remain absent until arrested and bought back to said camp by a party sent after him by his Commanding officer."

Stealing was the third charge, "In this: that he, the said Cornelius F. Harder, Private Co. A 101" Reg't Ohio Vol. Inf. did steal from his comrade, David Coulthard, Private, 2" Battery Light Artillery Minnesota Vols. One Silver Watch: this at the Camp of the 2" Minnesota Battery, near Murfreesboro, Tenn. On or about the 22" day of June A.D. 1863."

The charges were drawn up by the Battery's Lieutenant, Albert Woodbury and witnessed by four Battery men: Lt. Richard L. Dawley, 2nd Lt. Alexander Kinkead, Corporal Daniel Frye and Private David W. Coulthard. The charges were forwarded up the chain of command, but the outcome is unknown. The next record of Cornelius was that he was left sick in the hospital at Chattanooga in September of 1863.

Orders transferred him back to his Infantry regiment in October and he was present with Company A, 101st Ohio Infantry by November.

Cornelius stayed out of trouble in the infantry until he was assigned daily duty as a saddler in May of 1864. The good conduct didn't last as on November 27, he was listed as a deserter at Columbia, Tennessee. The company muster role made a careful list of all the equipment Cornelius had taken when he left along with the value of each item.

| | |
|---|---------|
| 1 Springfield Rifle Musket, Complete (58 cal) | \$19.25 |
| 1 cartridge box, Complete (58 cal) | 3.25 |
| 1 Ball screw | .13 |
| 1 screw driver | .20 |
| 1 Spring vice | .30 |
| 1 Knapsack | 2.15 |
| 1 Haversack | .40 |
| 1 Canteen and strap | .45 |
| 1 Shelter Tent | 4.60 |
| Total: | \$30.96 |

On December 29, Cornelius was listed as a patient at Hospital No. 3 in Nashville, Tennessee, and was due two months pay on the hospital muster role. The regimental muster role dated December 31 listed him as a deserter and again detailed the equipment Cornelius had and its respective values. The desertion was

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probably a misunderstanding of his being left at the hospital and must have been cleared up as Cornelius returned to duty with the 101st Ohio on January 28, 1865.

However, by February 8th when the Regiment was at Huntsville, he was back under arrest for desertion once again. This time, charges were preferred and the specifications listed desertion. Again, the list of his equipment with its value was noted, but this time the value of some articles had gone down, so he only owed \$28.41.

Despite all the charges preferred against him at one time or another, Cornelius was with his company when they were discharged from the service at the end of the war. His discharge was listed as honorable at Camp Harker, Tennessee, on June 12, 1865. He was owed back pay of \$116.79 since he had not received pay since August 31, 1864. The government got its money back, though, as they held \$25.75 from his pay to cover the cost of lost equipment.

Cornelius did not remain in Ohio. By 1880, he was living in Canaan, Columbia County, New York, with his wife and children and working as a laborer. He and his wife, Ruby, had four children living with them at the time, two girls and two boys. The eldest son was 26 with the occupation of laborer. The youngest two were at a school and the eldest daughter was at home. Cornelius and Ruby must have moved around some as the first two children were born in New York. The third was born in Massachusetts and the last one back in New York again. The next record found is when Cornelius died on September 27, 1887. He was laid to rest in the Red Rock Cemetery in Red Rock, Columbia County, New York. Ruby was laid to rest beside him on December 10, 1912.

Records only hint at a relationship between Cornelius and another Second Battery man, Henry Harder. A family record lists the children of John and Rebecca Harder. Failing Cornelius was the oldest, Henry was four years younger. With a first name like Failing, it would be little surprise if he went by his middle name. While the family record dates do not correspond exactly with the ages the boys said they were when they enlisted, the locations of birth do match. Henry's apparent downturn in his behavior—according to Captain Hotchkiss—coincides with the departure of Cornelius from the Battery. Henry's urgently needed leave also matches close to the dates Cornelius was in the hospital in Nashville. Were they brothers who managed to connect during the war? The sparse records left leave much room for guessing, but provide few answers.



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SILVER MEDAL AND PREMIUM.

This "ESSENCE" was awarded a SILVER MEDAL, by the American Institute, New York; also a PREMIUM by the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, in 1851—in both Institutes, the highest Premium awarded for such articles.

[See the Certificates, in our Circulars, of Drs. BOOTH and CHILTON, two of the first practical chemists in the United States; also of several other prominent chemists.]

* Dealers in Coffee can make a better and surer profit on this article than they make on coffee in the grain. A liberal discount allowed to wholesale dealers.

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TO MAKE ESSENCE OF COFFEE.

(From Mrs. Beaton's Book of Household Management)

To every 1/4 lb. of ground coffee allow 1 small teaspoonful of powdered chicory, 3 small teacupfuls, or 1 pint, of water.
Mode.—Let the coffee be freshly ground, and, if possible, freshly roasted; put it into a percolator, or filter, with the chicory, and pour slowly over it the above proportion of boiling water. When it has all filtered through, warm the coffee sufficiently to bring it to the simmering-point, but do not allow it to boil; then filter it a second time, put it into a clean and dry bottle, cork it well, and it will remain good for several days. Two tablespoonfuls of this essence are quite sufficient for a breakfast-cupful of hot milk. This essence will be found particularly useful to those persons who have to rise extremely early; and having only the milk to make boiling, is very easily and quickly prepared. When the essence is bottled, pour another 3 tea-cupfuls of boiling water slowly on the grounds, which, when filtered through, will be a very weak coffee. The next time there is essence to be prepared, make this weak coffee boiling, and pour it on the ground coffee instead of plain water: by this means a better coffee will be obtained. Never throw away the grounds without having made use of them in this manner; and always cork the bottle well that contains this preparation, until the day that it is wanted for making the fresh essence. Allow 2 tablespoonfuls for a breakfast-cupful of hot milk.

Or you can just buy your essence of coffee from George Hummel!

Advertisement for Hummels Essence of Coffee, 1851, from Rae's Philadelphia pictorial directory & panoramic advertiser.

Recap

Meeting, June 27, Red Wing

Okay, so it was only our regular meeting, held outside in Colvill Park in Red Wing adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing, we actually got to SEE each other!! It was a very pleasant day with a nice breeze, blue skies and abundant sunshine. Special thanks to Sgt. Duden for procuring and securing the big picnic pavilion for our use. It was so refreshing to see and talk with each other for the first time since the February meeting!

We are planning the July meeting using the same format—bring your own lunch and chairs. We are hoping to have the same pavilion again, but since it is a city park and because of the pandemic, reservations are not being taken. The pavilions are first come basis, so its anyones guess if we can get it again.

Still, we had an outing!!! That's been a rare occurrence in 2020!



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

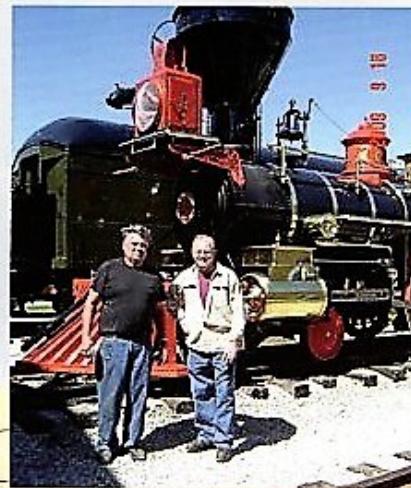
E-mail: momwendel@hotmail.com

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



Huzzah to President Ken for leading the meeting through some difficult conversations about current events as they relate to our hobby!

Building the Lincoln Funeral Train Railing



top photo: Dave Kloke and Dave Kervin
Notice the very large red lantern next to the smoke stack.

This story starts almost 50 years ago when I started working at the sheet metal trade, my father's craft. I liked the trade but it was increasingly moving to automation and out-of-the-box stuff to remain competitive. When I got a job with the Fire Department in 1973, sheet metal was pretty much relegated to hobby status along with blacksmithing.

I had a couple of old turning machines and some of Dad's old books, so I started pursuing old time seam and rivet sheet metal work. I would quiz Dad and other old guys about techniques and tools and soon I was reproducing items from years gone by.

In 2003, a friend from the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association, IVBA, said he gave my name to a friend that was building a steam locomotive and needed a headlight. Being recently retired, it was an appealing project. When Dave Kloke called,

we discussed the job and I arranged to come see him. I going to Chicago for other business, so I drove out to Elgin and met Kloke at his shop. His business was leasing and maintenance of heavy equipment, so this was no hobby shop. In one of the bays was the better part of a 19th century locomotive under construction. It was to be the Leviathan 63. Dave gave me a drawing of an old light from a museum with some basic measurements on it. He was confident I could do it, a lot more confident than I was!

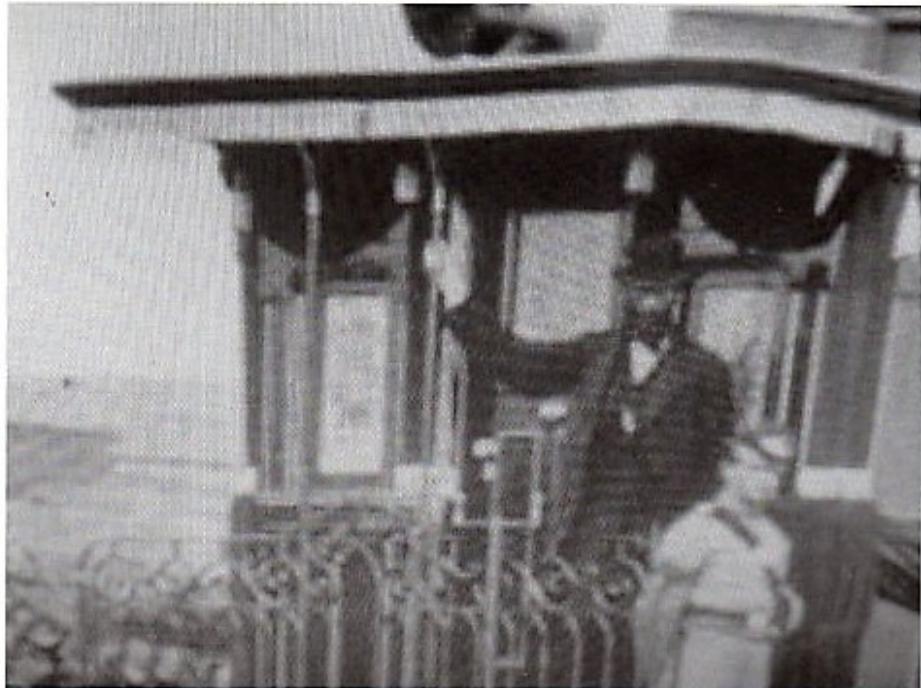
I bought some 24 gauge "paint grip" sheet metal and started trying to cypher how the thing was built originally. I had to buy some new wheels for my turning machines to make the decorative beads like the old one. It was a challenge, but I got it.

When Kloke picked it up, he loved it. He said, "Lots of people want these things. You could make as many as you wanted to." I responded, "I already have."

Dave and I remained friends, communicating once in a while. I went to see the completed engine when it was near Springfield at the Monticello Railway Museum. It was gorgeous, especially the light!

Time must have healed the memory of making the first light because when Dave called in 2008 and asked for 3 more lights, I agreed.

I enlisted the help of a recently retired friend that apprenticed with me back in the 60s. Even with our combined talent and the patterns from the first light, it was still a battle. These lights are as big as a dog house, so two would sit outside my little shop as we worked on them one at a time. When



Kloke picked them up, he was in town to plan the reenactment of the Lincoln funeral. He asked, "How would you like to build the iron railing on the Lincoln funeral car. I said, "H - - - yes, it's got to be easier than those headlights."

I was wrong.

I had no idea what it would look like but I had built gates and fence sections. How hard could it be? I did know I would need a partner with a bigger shop than mine. Rather than ask, I thought I would dangle a little bait and see what happened. I didn't have a picture yet but Kloke had sent a sketch of a scroll section. It wasn't very good but I took and showed it to Roger Lorance at an IVBA event. Roger said that's not right, and started drawing on the anvil with his ever-present soapstone. The hook was set. I had a partner.

Soon we got the first photograph of the train. It was really complicated but I was confident, maybe too confident. I showed the picture to Roger and he said, "That looks like it was cast." I agreed but what blacksmith wants to hear tha?! We were going to build history.

Kloke introduced me by email and phone to Wayne Wesolowski, the foremost living expert on the Lincoln train. Wayne had done years of research and had built

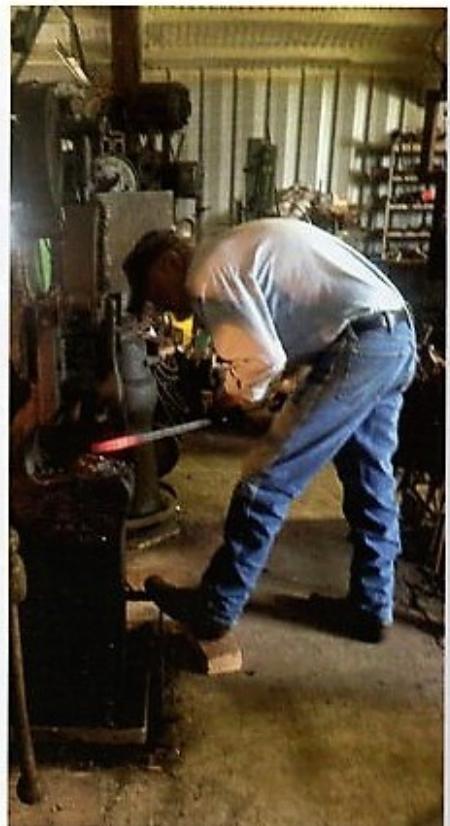
more than one scale model of the train. One is in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

I called Wayne and he offered to help in any way he could. He sent me more pictures and facts on the train.

In spite of my personal mantra, "life's too short to see it through a windshield," twice a week (sometimes more) I headed north to Roger's shop in rural Bellflower, 85 miles away. I was in Springfield, Roger was in Bellflower, and the train was in Elgin. Logistics weren't in our favor.

Roger and I studied the pictures intently. These were obviously old photos and when you tried to blow them up on the computer they became a mass of pixels. It was often hard to tell detail from shadows or glare. We tried to guess dimensions of stock by looking at pieces of iron and the pictures at the same time. We needed a measuring scale.

One day as I stood staring at a picture trying to find something in it to use for scale and it hit me. There were two guys in the picture. I set my dividers from the shoulder to the elbow on one guy. I then measured my upper arm. I scaled off that measurement and laid off some dimensions. I came up with nine feet for the length of the railing. I called Kloke and asked "how wide is your car?" He answered 9 foot 3. We had scale!



We started working in earnest in the spring of 2014. Roger and I both worked on sample scrolls for weeks. We came to the conclusion that no amount of upsetting and/or faggot welding was going to produce the mass needed for the halfpenny scrolls. Roger settled on forge welding 1/2" round stock to the end of a tapered bar to make the halfpenny. It worked great. One day as we worked on scrolls, Roger went over to the shelf and took a piece of 1/2" round out of a postal shipping box. He said,

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"This is wrought iron from a building in Alexandria VA, circa 1860s. Abe Lincoln was in Alexandria in 1864." He then cut it off to 1 1/4" and welded it to the tapered bar stock. We didn't keep track of which scroll it was but somewhere in that railing is iron that shared space with Abe Lincoln.

We wanted to use mortise and tenon joints on right angle connections and countersunk rivets on parallel ones. We decided that 3/8" x 3/4" tenons would be good. Drawing out tenons wasn't a major challenge, but hot punching holes that size was time consuming, inaccurate, and would probably cause "frog eyes", so we outsourced the punching. I contacted a local ornamental iron shop and the owner was glad to

help. He had to order the punch and die set which took two weeks to arrive. I laid out the holes and center-punched them for accuracy. We only did one short section at first. When we tried to set the tenons, the heat required transferred to the mortised bar and it distorted. We downsized the mortise and tenons to 3/8" x 1/2". That worked well but cost time, a new punch, and another wait.

Heating the tenons was also difficult. A rosebud torch was too much too soon. A regular welding tip took a lot of maneuvering to get an even heat. We finally settled on a twin tip torch with adjustable heads, purchased at a welding supply. We hooked the torch to a "gas saver" valve for quick starts and stops and we were in business!

We purchased 1/4" x 2" countersink rivets and a countersink bit to match the angle of the head. Not all of the holes could be sunk with the bit. The scrolls needed something different. A ball head bit in a die grinder connected to a speed reducer worked well. It pulled to the right, so we needed a good grip to hold center but it made a tight fine countersink in tight quarters.

The ends of the railing at the platform and the uprights that went to the roof appeared to be round. We figured the flat stock was 1 1/4", so tubing of that dimension would work. A friend of ours worked with tubing and ordered some for us. It was 1/4" wall, so it had a 3/4" hole in the center. It was perfect to tap a 7/8" thread. We figured we could make end connections by threading the tube. We borrowed a tap and die and started making sample pieces. Aside from a broken tap, borrowing a plumbers oiling pot, buying cutting oil for \$100 a gallon and running a few crooked threads, it went well. I planned on making our own threaded rod but after cutting an inch of 7/8" rod by hand, allthread seemed like a good alternative.

Roger and I went to Elgin in June of 2014 to see the train car we were building the railing for and take some measurements. Beyond Roger and Kloke getting to meet for the first time and some conversation, it was a wasted trip. The train car was still a steel frame and the platform wasn't built yet.

A month later, Kloke called and asked if we could hurry up the side railing because they were putting the siding on the car and mounting points needed to be established. Roger worked for days laying out the railing and sent the full scale drawing to Kloke. The plan was to put bolts through the center of the scrolls to hide them. Kloke marked the drawing where he was welding 1/2" nuts behind the siding and sent it back. Roger

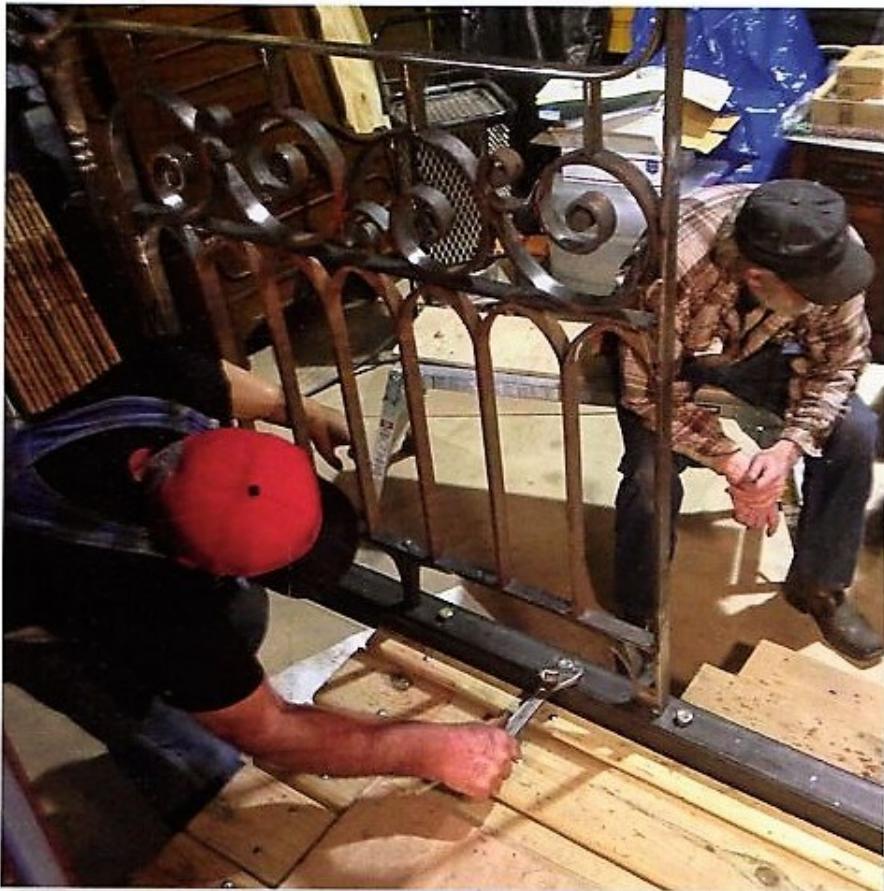


went to work trying to build to the drawing but the iron had its own ideas. He could not make the scroll centers hit the marks. The railings were tough enough to build but hitting the marks was out of the question.

Another issue of picture clarity raised its ugly head. The side railing changed from flat to round as it descended and terminated low on the car but where did it end? It wasn't clear in any picture we could find and Wayne and Kloke didn't know either.

The pictures did show a raised decoration on the round section, so Roger had an idea. He purchased some 1 1/4" bearing collars and rounded the edges on the lathe. We would cut the piece off and thread it and connect whatever

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Hidden latch mechanicals

was needed after a field measurement was taken in Elgin. We would cover the joint with the bearing collar. That worked so well we decided to make all tubing connections where there were raised decorations.

I had a bout with skin cancer on the back of my hammer hand in the fall of 2014 and missed a lot of work. Roger did not sit idle. He finished the side rails and proudly had them hung on the wall of his shop. They were gorgeous! I took a picture and sent it to Kloke. That picture soon appeared on the train car's Facebook page reported as their creation. Fame was elusive . . . Roger didn't seem to mind, but I did.

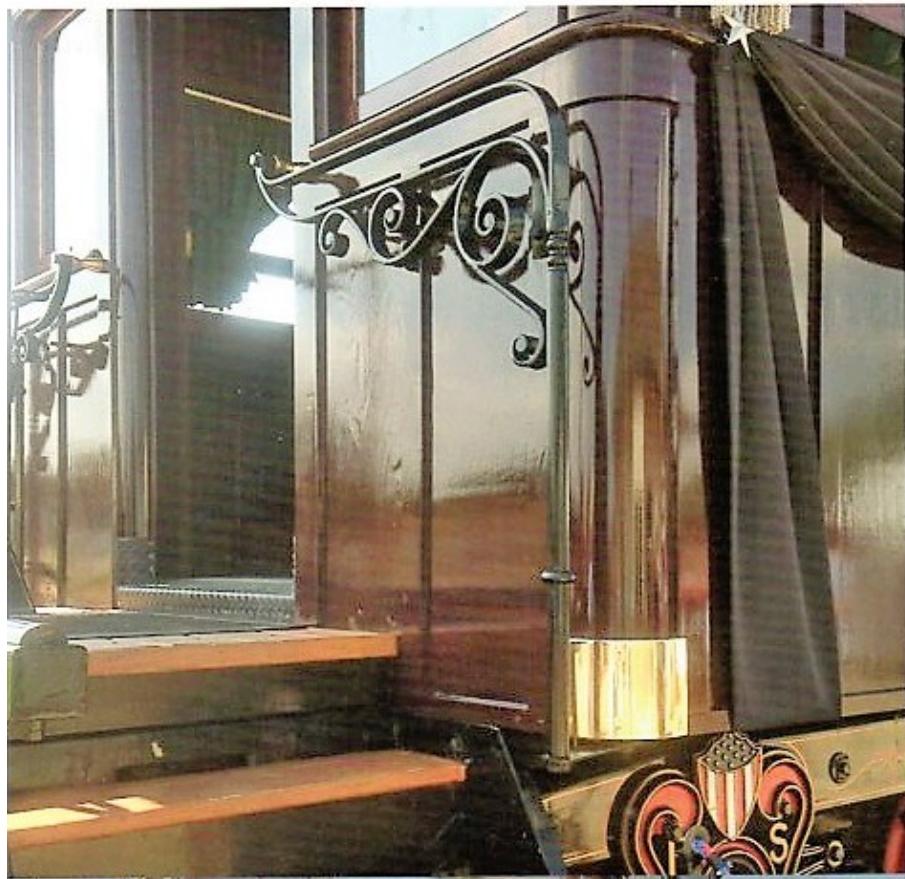
Another picture clarity issue were the finials that connected the railing at the roof of the car. We weren't sure what they really looked like, so I made some sketches and sent them to Wayne. He picked one and I set out to build it. They grew out from 1 1/4" tube, so two pieces of 3/8" for the scrolls with a piece of 1/2" in between would work. Some welding and grinding produced an exact replica.

Connecting the railing to the platform was accomplished by tapping thread into the bottom braces however, the middle braces at the gate rail were flat stock. We got around that problem by hiding a 1/2" coupling nut inside the brace's gussets. The coupling nut measured 3/4" on the diamond, so we welded it on center to the upright and covered it with pieces of 1/4" flat stock, cut to fit. Once welded and ground off they were invisible.

Although Roger and I worked on this project from inception, some of our friends helped out at times. Vicki (Doc) and Tom Shertz, a husband and wife blacksmith team came and helped Roger with scrolls. Our friend Jim Winch, who smiths with me at a local historic site, would ride along several times. I was glad for the company on the road and Jim was good help. Jeff Farmer of Kentucky who visits Roger a couple times a year helped out too. My nephew, Joe, an aspiring blacksmith, would ride along on occasion and help. He took the few pictures of Roger and me together.



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left to right: Dave Kloke; Dave Kervin; Doc; Tom; Jerry, the lead carpenter on the car rebuild



The entire job was fraught with setbacks which we overcame, but the clock and the calendar loomed in the back of our minds. The reenactment the car was built for was happening May 2, 2015 and we couldn't even start the gate until we installed the railing and got some good measurements.

The railing was ready to install by winter and then bad weather became an issue. We watched the weather forecast and picked two days in February. Our team—Tom, Doc, Jim, Roger, and I—packed up my truck and headed north.

Kloke's building that housed the car was crowded with the car and workers. It was like Santa's workshop. We set right to work with Roger and Doc trying to find and utilize the mounting nuts behind the siding and Tom, Jim, and I mounting the railing.

Roger had worried about the stability of the railing. He would constantly relate how every old cowboy movie he watched had a train with a wobbly railing. I too harbored concern but when we got it bolted to the car, it was straight, square and solid. There is a picture of me standing behind the railing that day and the ear to ear smile is genuine!

Roger and Doc had a hard won success also. We had devised a way to recover the lost mounting points by bending oversized brackets that could be cut for spacing and hole alignment in Elgin and then field-welded out of sight. It worked great.

A year's worth of work had come to fruition! Things were finally looking up. We had a warm bed, a hot meal, a round of drinks and good friends to share it. In a blacksmith's world, it doesn't get much better.

We were back to work early the next morning to field measure and install the uprights that connect the railing and finials. The car had been painted and the building was packed with antique furniture to furnish the car, so welding and grinding took lots of care. We planned on staying one night only but everyone agreed to stay over and get everything buttoned up before we left.

In the morning, we finished up the rail and took several close measurements for the gate before we headed home. It had to be perfect—and functional.

Roger set to work designing within the dimensions we had to meet. The gate space was smaller than we planned, but we got it to work. Now we needed to hinge it and latch it. Neither hinges nor a latch were evident in any picture. Roger and I both had agonized over both and Kloke and Wayne had no idea on either. One day I had an *aha* moment and sketched it out. We would form the latch handle to the shape of a scroll and dog it on the other side. It worked. We had a functional latch that was basically invisible, just like the original picture.

I had an appointment with the eye doctor the next day and asked Roger, "Who can help you if I can't?" The next afternoon I had emergency surgery for a detached retina. Tom and Doc stepped up again and Jeff Farmer just happened to be staying at Roger's, so I was barely missed. They got the gate installed and Doc sent me a picture. I missed the "golden spike" but was relieved it was done.

My sight was still poor when the train came to Springfield but I got to see the finished job. I attended a fundraising banquet that night along with Jim, his wife, and my family. Kloke was still trying to pay for the car, donations hadn't met expectations.

I once boasted to Kloke that the guys that built the first one wouldn't be able to tell the difference. It turned out, that was not an idle boast. The only noticeable difference is the height of the side railing and the platform railing. Even though the car was a historical replica, it had to meet modern Federal Railroad Administration, FRA, standards. The original railing was too low, it wouldn't meet FRA spec, so we built it taller. Kloke added a safety railing to the roller end of the car for people exiting the tour. The original had no rail on the roller end.

I once quipped, "From the headlight on the front of the Leviathan 63, which pulled the restored funeral car, to the railing on the back, the 2015 Lincoln Funeral Train began and ended in my shop." It was a long road from beginning to end.

From the writings and lectures of Wayne Wesolowski, the 2015 Lincoln Funeral Train design consultant

The "Lincoln Funeral Car" was constructed in Alexandria Virginia in the Car Shops of the Military Railroad System between 1863 and 1865. It was named the United States and was intended to be the first "Air Force One." Lincoln never used it while he was alive.

When it was decided that Lincoln would be buried in Springfield Illinois, the car was modified to serve as a funeral car. One of the decorative end railings was removed and replaced with a simple roller system to facilitate removal of the coffin for the eleven open coffin funerals.

When the railing was removed from one end of the car, so was the hand brake mechanism. Since the Lincoln car had half the normal brakes, it was always coupled to another car after modification and rode second to last in the train. Air brakes were invented in 1869. The car had only leaf springs since coil springs had not been developed. A "volute" spring was employed in the coupler system. This as a flat spring made into a roll and then pulled out from the center.

After the war, the Military RR System was disbanded. Any drawings and records of the building of the car were apparently discarded.

Without a railroad, the government sold the car to the Union Pacific RR for an executive car. The car changed hands four more times and ended up with interurban magnate, Thomas Lowry, who set about restoring it as a relic. While on display in Columbia Heights near Minneapolis, MN, the car was consumed in a prairie fire on March 18, 1911. Local residents were invited to take souvenirs, so only pictures and a few relics remain. ■

Editor's Note: A recent National Geographic magazine issue featured the story of the Lincoln Funeral Train. To read it online, visit: abana.org/lincoln-funeral-train. It's a very interesting story and includes many historical photographs.

