

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

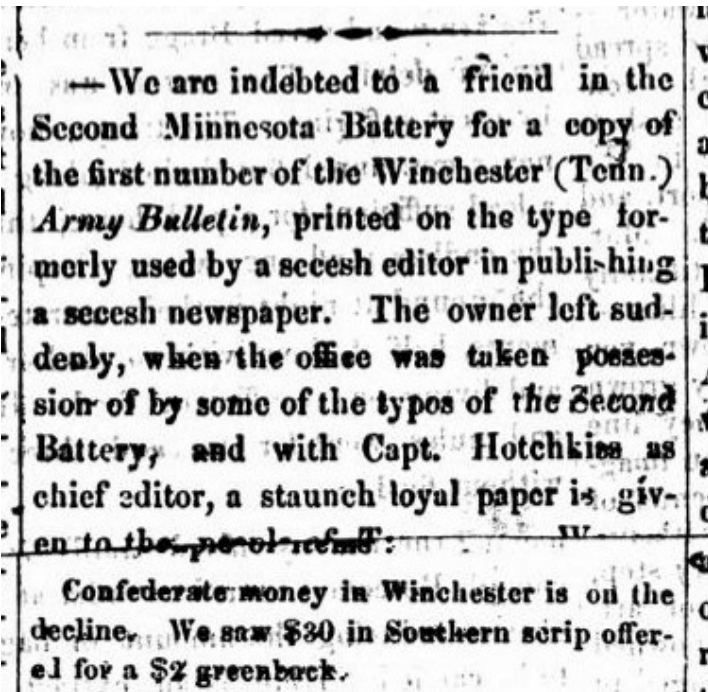
“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 310

August 2023

On This Date-160 Years Ago

The article below appeared in the July 30th, 1863 newspaper, *the St. Cloud Democrat*. The Battery boys were in Tennessee in the summer of 1863 and were not constantly engaged in battle. Soldiers with little to do will always find something to do and our boys did. They took over a newspaper office and began printing their own newspaper under the leadership of their Captain, William Hotchkiss. Hotchkiss was a printer by trade, so he knew how to work the presses. If only we could see one of these papers!!



Upcoming Events

August 12 Gun Maintenance Day

It is time to do some maintenance on the Gun and Limber. We will start at 10:00 am at the home of John Cain, 1640 Woodland Drive, Red Wing.

The following tasks are on the “to do” list:

Limber Chest—Sand, prime and paint the facing wall of the chest. Replace the leather straps on the chest cover.

Ramrods—Sand and touch up as needed.

Limber Carriage—Dress the soft iron tires (Neal to provide Die Grinder). Sand and paint as needed.

Gun Carriage—Sand, prime and paint the end of the Gun Barrel. Dress the soft iron tires of the Gun Carriage (Neal to provide Die Grinder). Sand and paint as needed. Special attention should be paid to the ramrod straps. Check the interior of the Sponge Bucket for rust and repair as needed. Check the carriage for touch up if needed.

Travel Cover—Apply to the chest and fit needed bungee cords for travel.

Ice Chest—Repair the fitting on the outside of the chest plate (Missing part should be inside the chest.)

Those attending should **bring a paint brush no greater than 1 to 1.5 inches and a touchup artist brush** for detailing along with a steady hand. Sand paper, paint, paint thinner and soap rinse will be provided.

Aug 26-27 Morristown MN – Ahlman’s Annual Shooters Roundup.

Our Battery firing demonstrations have historically been voted one of the most popular venues of the weekend. The event is **open from 9:00am – 5:00pm**. We will camp inside Fort Ahlman and provide cannon firing demonstrations at 10:00am 12:00pm 2:00pm 4:00pm both days. Breakfast and lunch will be provided both days to all members attending **IF YOU RSVP TO Daryl that you are coming!** It is expected—but NOT promised—that we will be invited to a sit down pork tenderloin dinner in the Lucky Lady Dance Hall on Saturday evening.

Next Meeting

September 9, 11:00 am

Neil Bruce home, 859 Pioneer Road, Red Wing, MN

This will be a POTLUCK dinner as well as meeting. More details and what members can bring will come in an email soon.



Battery Profile

Knud Torgerson

Knud came to Minnesota from his birth place in Vinje, Norway, with his two brothers, Tolleff and Kittil, each bringing their families. The brothers settled on farmland close to each other in Dakota County, an area that was attracting many Norwegian immigrants in the late 1850's. It was said the land and climate reminded them of Norway and the land was good farm country. Knud was the middle in age of the three brothers.

When news of the draft rendezvous reached the Torgersons, Knud was the first of the three to enlist. He mustered in on August 26, 1864. He agreed to serve for one year and was promised a bounty of \$100, though he received none of it up front. He was 38 years old, had blue eyes, light hair, and a light complexion. He stood 5' 5-1/2" tall and was a farmer. Knud signed his name on his enlistment papers.

One day after Knud enlisted, brother Kittil joined the Battery and four days after Kittil, the final brother, Tolleff, arrived to enlist. The three tented together. The last year of the war saw no hard fighting for the Second Battery and the most Knud did was drill, guard duty, and scouting missions. Knud managed not to be injured in the train wreck that injured Kittil.

The Battery was mustered out at Fort Snelling on August 16, 1865, and the brothers went home to their farms and families.

In 1888, Knud moved to Bottineau County, North Dakota, and took land in the Turtle Mountains. The area was still very wild and they were among the first settlers there. The drought in Minnesota had driven many farmers out of business and the Torgersons were some of them. They were legally squatters on the land until it was surveyed in the 1890's and they could apply for homesteads.



The first year Knud and his wife, Anne, lived in North Dakota, they had only a dugout on the banks of Thomas Lake. By the second year, they had a log house built. All of their children came to North Dakota, six boys and one girl, and most remained near by.

The first church in the Turtle Mountains was the Vinje Lutheran Church. Knud and Anne were charter members and it was Knud that gave the church its name. The first services were held in the Knud Torgerson home.

Knud applied for a pension in 1899, the rheumatism he suffered with had made it almost impossible for him to continue farming. Both of his brothers signed affidavits for him, testifying to the cold and exposure Knud had been subject to during the war. The pension was granted.

Anne died in 1892 and Knud followed her in death on October 15, 1908. They were buried in the cemetery near the Vinje Church. There is an elaborate family stone marking Knud's resting place and the inscription is all in Norwegian except for the words, "Soldier in Wm Aug. Hotchkiss 2nd Battery for Light Art'y, Minn. Vet. Vols."

Throughout all records of Knud, the spelling of his name changes without reason. His Norwegian accent or lack of spelling skills may have been to blame or perhaps he anglicized his name. What the correct spelling should have been will never be known.

Knowing Your Stuff

Submitted By Michael Ritchie

While camped on the lawn of the Arnold House in June, one of the organizers told me the museum had recently acquired a Colt rifled musket. I promised to send what information I had about the weapon after a little research. I thought the following may be of interest to our members as well. I am not an expert in firearms, but the facts below are taken from reference books that I consulted.

The musket at the Arnold House is a special model 1861 contract musket. Special models were made by Colt and three other manufacturers between 1861 and 1865. All were .58 caliber with 40" barrels.

The U.S. Government awarded Colt contracts for 112,500 special model 1861 muskets. Only 75,000 were delivered. The Colt muskets are marked: US/PT F.A.MFGCO./HARTFORD CT. The date of manufacture is found behind the hammer.

U.S. military arms were marked with inspector cartouches. The cartouche will be an oval with letters indicating the name of the inspector. Many guns have more than one inspector cartouche. The inspector cartouches are found on the left side of the stock opposite the lock. Many of the Colt muskets have a DAP cartouche indicating they were inspected by Dwight A. Perkins. Some Colt muskets are also marked with the letters N.J. on the barrel and the stock. These letters show the muskets were supplied to the state of New Jersey for its regiments. If the Arnold House musket does not have the N.J. marking, it indicates the musket was issued to the U.S. Government.

Another marking is a V over P found by the eagle on the barrel breech.

No serial numbers were used in the production of the 1861 musket.

After the Civil War, many of these muskets were shipped to Europe by the Francis Bannerman Company of New York City. Bannerman was a dealer in war surplus equipment. Many of these muskets were converted to flint lock by the European purchasers for use in their Colonial trade.

Below is the reference in "Flayderman's Guide to Antique American Firearms...and their Values," 6th edition. By Norm Flayderman. 1994. As this book is almost 30 years old, the values listed are not accurate.

Colt Model 1861 Special Musket



Model 1861 Special Musket. Manufactured 1861-65. Production usually estimated at 75,000. Recent information from government records indicates that the total was 100,000 and that many of them supplied for state contracts; this will explain the numerous specimens encountered with N.J. (New Jersey) markings on both barrel and stock.

.58 caliber. Single shot muzzleloader made on government contract for use in the Civil War. 40" barrel standard; three

barrel bands.

Oil stained walnut stock. Metal parts for most of the production were finished "in the white," but bluing was standard on nipples, rear sights, and various screws.

No serial numbers were used in the standard production of the Model 1861 Musket. On the lockplate is stamped: **U.S./COLT'S PT F.A. MFG CO./HARTFORD CT.** The date of manufacture appears behind the hammer, e.g., **1861**. An American eagle was marked on the bolster, and government inspector stamps are on several parts:

5B-255 Values—Very Good \$1,000 Exc. \$2,600

(Note: Further details on the .58 caliber "Special Musket" appear in Chapter IX, U.S. Military Longarms.)

Recap

July 8 Family Fun Day, Red Wing,

Members set up four stations in addition to the cannon on the grounds of the Goodhue County History Center. The weather was about as perfect as we could ever ask for as we set up multiple tents for the enlisted area and musician (Mikaela). The Lieutenant had some



artifacts and flags at his station while Privates Ritchie and Hoekstra staffed a small arms tent. The ladies (and one young gentleman) highlighted children's activities during the war years with a fish pond game, some toys, the children's quilt, and a lot of lint scraping and bandage rolling. The number of visitors was down from last year, but keep in mind, last year, we set a RECORD with the attendance at their Family Fun Day events. We chatted with more than 200 people during the three hours of the event.



Our youngest private, Private Tristan Overby, has run powder before, but this was the first time he explained his role on the gun crew to a crowd and he did very well. He also got a lesson in keeping cadence on the drum from Private Cunningham.

People were interested and asked a lot of questions, staying for longer periods of time. As the staff of the History Center was leaving (we were loading the gun), they again expressed their thanks and appreciation for the excellent turnout for the event that day.



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: 2mnbattery@gmail.com

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

