

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 314

December 2023-January 2024

On This Date-160 Years Ago

Morning Reports December 1863

(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

6 Sergt. D. C. Munsey - gone to Nashville for the clothing of the company By S. F. O. No. 322 Maj. Gen. Thomas.

9 1 Horse died in camp

10 Corp. Obert and privates D. W. Coulthard, E. A. Furguson and Jas. M. Dinsmore returned from Stevenson where they were on detached service -- of 38 horses "Absent" 3 died and 35 turned in to Capt. S. S. Alshire by Order.

16 Sergt. D. C. Munsey returned from Nashville. Privates Fred. A. Leathers and McCrory detailed on daily duty as teamsters. Private Penwick relieved from duty as teamster. Contraband James Duffy left. Harry Akers dropped - the Q. M. having decided that he is not entitled to rations.

18 Private Ingebret Johnson returned to the Co. from detached service

22 One Horse died in Camp

24 One Horse died in Camp

25 Private Fordis Averill returned from hospt.

26 1 Horse died in camp

27 Corp. Oliver P. Brown detailed from Co. D, 34 Ills Vols. returned to his Co. One Horse died in Camp.

31 Nelson H. Fulton takes up on the report from which he was dropped by Error. Geo Townsend & Geo Tilton reported for duty heretofore reported on detached service at Div. Hd. Qrs. John C. Phelps transferred to Invalid Corps by Gen. Order No. 320

Planning Ahead

Please be on the watch for potential events the Battery might consider attending in 2024. A number of the traditional events the Battery has attend in the past have ended, so our event list is shrinking. Gather as much information as possible to present at the January meeting for consideration.

Merry Christmas!!



Thomas Nast drawing of Santa visiting a Union Camp in 1863.

Next Meeting

There is no meeting in December due to the Christmas holidays. Enjoy these special days! January's meeting will be announced once we get a little closer.



Battery Profile

Charles L. Mason

Charles was born in Evansville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania. Just when he came to Minnesota is something about which Charles neglected to leave any records, though it is known he was with at least his father. Charles was in Mantorville, Dodge County, in the fall of 1862 when he decided to enlist in the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers, Company H. His agreement was to serve with the Rangers for 12 months beginning November 2, 1862. Since Charles was only 19 years old at the time, his father, H. P. Mason, signed a note of permission to allow Charles to enlist and noted home as being in Wasojia, Minnesota. Charles joined his company in St. Peter, so it is unclear where in southeastern Minnesota he may actually have lived before the war.

The fall of 1862 was a time of turmoil in Minnesota because of a conflict with the Dakota Indians. Charles got caught up in that conflict and was away from the Rangers on a special detail "sent after Indians" in March and April of 1863. Charles served with the Rangers just a few days over his 12 months, being discharged on November 24, 1863. At the time of his discharge, he had a number of deductions to his final pay for items he possessed. He had been advanced \$56.62 in clothing in addition to owing for a revolver, a screw driver, and other small items of equipment.

A year later, the fall of 1864, a draft rendezvous at Fort Snelling was going on to fill the ranks of existing Minnesota units as well as raise new ones. Records indicate Charles enlisted a second time at Mantorville in Dodge County, Minnesota, but other records state he was credited to fill the draft quota in Vernon.

For his agreement to serve for one year in the Second Minnesota Battery, Charles received a bounty of \$100. He was given one third of the bounty upon enlistment with the balance due at a later date. The descriptive roll said Charles was a "21 years and 7/12 months" old farmer with blue eyes, light hair and a light complexion. He was 5', 11" tall. Charles had enlisted on September 3, but he was not mustered into the service until October 8 at Fort Snelling.

The last year of the war for the Battery was spent mostly in garrison with details of men sent off of various tasks. Charles was one of the men detailed to cut logs for the garrison on December 20, 1864. He remained on this detail until March 20, 1865, then stayed with the Battery until they were mustered out at Fort Snelling in August.

Charles left little trace of his life until he married Margery D. Arnold in Dodge County on June 26, 1872. Margery's maiden name leads to speculation if she might have been the sister of John Arnold, another member of the Second Minnesota Battery. John Arnold was also from Dodge County. Charles and John did not actually serve together as John was discharged before Charles joined, but being from the same county, they may have known each other.

By 1880, Charles and Margery were living at 1501 Adams Street in Minneapolis and Charles was working in the woods and saw mills. They had no children, but a boarder, a school teacher named Ellen Comey, lived with them.

Three years later on March 7, 1883, Kity Bell was born.

The 1888 Minneapolis Directory provided the Masons address as 1501 NE Adams Street in Minneapolis. The abbreviation "lab" appears in the listing as does "r" which usually meant the property was rented. The 1890-91 Directory shows a change in occupation. Charles was working as a police officer. He was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic in Minneapolis, but he did not claim his service to the Battery. Rather, he listed his service with the Mounted Rangers.

Sometime in the next years, Charles applied for a pension and it was granted at the rate of \$6.00 a month. He received his last pension check on October 4, 1894. Cancer of the stomach and liver caused his death and it came on Christmas Eve, 1894. He was 51 years old.

Margery made arrangements for Charles to be buried in the Hillside Cemetery in Minneapolis and applied for a widow's pension for herself and for Kity.

Charles rests near a large family stone with a flat marker for each he and Margery.



Fact or Fiction? Only Diligent Research Will Tell

From the *Daily Dose of History* Facebook page

In 1863, John Greenleaf Whittier published his poem, "Barbara Frietchie" in the *Atlantic Monthly*. In the poem, Whittier relates the story of Stonewall Jackson and his men passing through Frederick, Maryland, in 1862 and spotting an American flag hanging from an upstairs window. Jackson orders his men to halt and fire on the flag, after which 90-year-old Barbara Frietchie rushes to the window, takes up the flag (which she had hung there) and shakes it defiantly at the rebels.

*"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.
A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;
The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word:
"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.*

And, according to the poem, Jackson's corps had to march through Frederick under the defiant Mrs. Frietchie's flag.

By the time the poem was published, both General Jackson and Mrs. Fritchie (the correct spelling of her name) were dead, and the poem, which was an instant hit, had made Mrs. Fritchie a national heroine. The city of Frederick still celebrates her defiant gesture and for generations, American school children were required to memorize Whittier's poem. Winston Churchill knew the poem by heart and he recited it during his visit to the States in 1943.

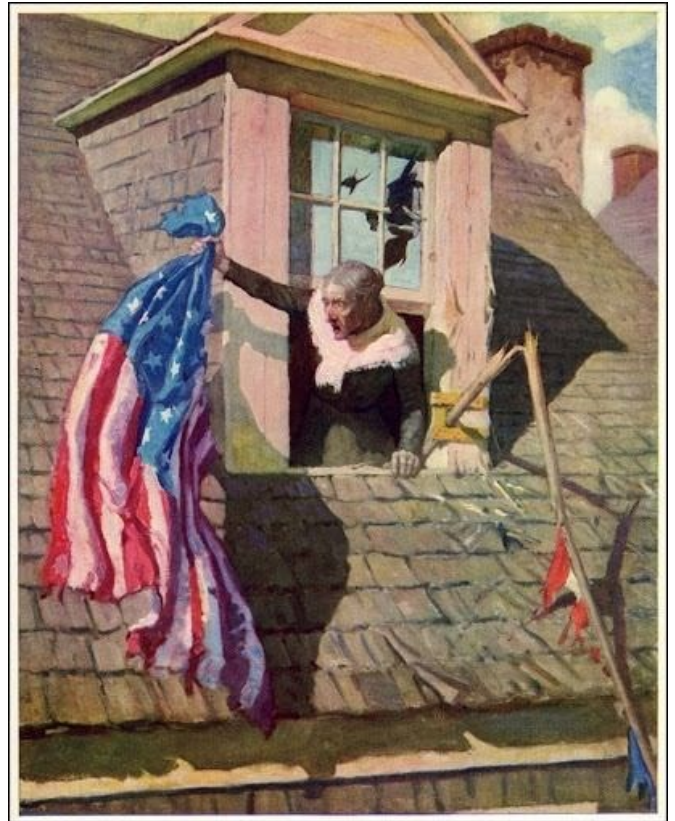
*Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.
Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.
Over Barbara Frietchie's grave
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!
Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;
And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!*

It is indeed a stirring tale. **A pity it never happened.**

In fact, although Whittier claimed to have gotten the story from an eyewitness, Stonewall Jackson did not pass through Frederick in 1862 and while Mrs. Fritchie was indeed a loyal Unionist with a flag she proudly displayed on patriotic occasions, she was a bedridden invalid in the fall of 1862 and could not have shaken her flag and fist at the passing rebels below her.

Mrs. Fritchie has nevertheless entered into American folklore as a symbol of American spirit. Had she had a chance to shake her flag at Stonewall Jackson, let us confidently assume she would have done so boldly.

Barbara Hauer Fritchie was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on December 3, 1766, two hundred fifty-seven years ago.



Recap

Submitted by Daryl Duden

Veterans Day – Winona, MN

It was a cold brisk morning at 10:00am in Veterans Memorial Park in Winona, MN when members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery rolled in with their cannon to participate in the 11-11-11 Ceremony. Because it was a Saturday, the crowd in Winona was modestly smaller than normal without the numerous students who are usually in attendance. The theme for the program this year was "Honoring our Draftees." The sound of our three round gun salute bouncing off the bluffs of Winona was once again incredible. Battery members who volunteered to attend the ceremony were Bruce Arnoldy, Neil Bruce, Ken Cunningham, Daryl Duden, Bart Hoekstra, James Livingstone, Mikaela Livingstone, Jim Morgan, Michael Ritchie, Thomas Schmit, Linnea Schmit and Brian Tomashek.



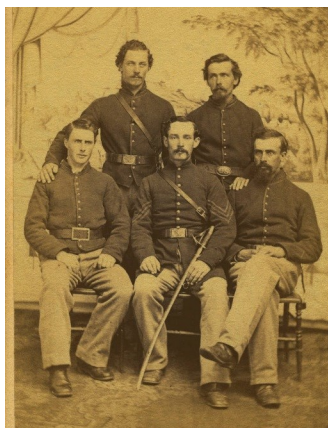
In Case You are Traveling Through Chicago

Submitted by Brian Tomashek

Ever wondered why there are cannons on the 6th floor of the Harold Washington Library Center? Or what's with those marble busts in the 9th floor Special Collections Reading Room? Illinois was undoubtedly important to the Union cause during the Civil War, but just how did CPL get cannons and statues, not to mention swords, uniforms, books, portraits and more?

In 1893, the Library Board chose the corner of Michigan Avenue and Randolph Street as the location for its future building. Many people believed this land was reserved for the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), a veterans' group for Union soldiers who fought in the Civil War. Ultimately, legal action determined the library could have the land, but it must make room for the GAR, which wanted a memorial hall for its members. CPL gave the GAR extensive rooms and signed a fifty year lease that expired in 1947. At that time, the Library took over caring for the GAR's collection of art, artifacts, papers, weapons and more. In 1991, when CPL moved to its current location, the GAR collection came, too.

There's much more than what is displayed throughout the library. You can view images of the collection in the Wayne Whalen Digital Collection. Browse our catalog for Civil War documents, both official and personal. Visit our Reading Room to see more from the Civil War. The items pictured here are just the beginning!



1862 members of Taylors Battery.



Sword Presented to JB Finley, 1st Lieut. 14 Mich. Battery by his R.R. friends of Chicago, Aug. 1st, 1864."

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>

The Civil War Artillery Projectile and Cannon Home Page

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Submitted by Daryl Duden

Daryl found this website and recommend it to the newsletter. It is an extensive site and well researched. Much of the information has been included in a real book with paper pages as well. The following is a quick overview of the website and how it—and the book—were completed.

During the American Civil War, more varieties of artillery projectiles and cannon were used than in any other time in military history. The outbreak of hostilities in 1861 found inventors on both sides searching for the perfect blend of sabot, body, and fuze to create the artillery projectile that would give the military advantage to their respective cannoneers. This seemingly unending search for that elusive, perfect projectile continued even after the end of the Civil War.

As a result of these seemingly endless innovations, the student of Civil War artillery today faces a fascinating, and potentially confusing, maze of hundreds of battlefield tested artillery projectiles, cannon, and shells.

This site was designed to help the reader to better understand the variety of Civil War artillery projectiles used by the Confederate and Federal forces during the War Between the States. The author, Jack W. Melton Jr., has made every effort to be accurate, and whenever possible, archival and patent records have been used to support the information contained herein.



To order the ground breaking book on Civil War artillery projectiles, go to the web link below the title of this article. Put it on your Christmas list!!

