



2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

“ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 328

April 2025

On This Date-160 Years Ago

A timeline of April, 1865

April 2 - Grant's spring offensive begins a general advance and breaks through Lee's lines at Petersburg. Confederate Gen. Ambrose P. Hill is killed. Lee evacuates Petersburg. The Confederate Capital, Richmond, is evacuated. Fires and looting break out. The next day, Union troops enter and raise the Stars and Stripes.

April 4 - President Lincoln tours Richmond where he enters the Confederate White House. With "a serious, dreamy expression," he sits at the desk of Jefferson Davis for a few moments.

April 9 - Gen. Robert E. Lee surrenders his Confederate Army to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at the village of Appomattox Court House in Virginia. Grant allows Rebel officers to keep their sidearms and permits soldiers to keep horses and mules.

April 10 - Celebrations break out in Washington.

April 14- The Stars and Stripes is ceremoniously raised over Fort Sumter. That night, Lincoln and his wife, Mary, see the play "*Our American Cousin*" at Ford's Theater. At 10:13 p.m., during the third act of the play, John Wilkes Booth shoots the president in the head. Doctors attend to the President in the theater then move him to a house across the street. He never regains consciousness.

April 15 - President Abraham Lincoln dies at 7:22 in the morning. Vice President Andrew Johnson assumes the presidency.

April 18 - Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrenders to Sherman near Durham, North Carolina.

Lincoln's Funeral Procession rolls down Pennsylvania Ave.

April 26 - John Wilkes Booth is shot and killed in a tobacco barn in Virginia.

Election Results!

Election results are in! Ken Cunningham is the organizational president for the Second Battery. James Livingstone was elected vice president. Daryl Duden was elected to the position of secretary/treasurer, and Vickie Wendel as historian.

Military leadership positions for 2025 are as follows: John Cain as lieutenant; Ron Graves Stinson is quartermaster sergeant; Daryl Duden is sergeant, and the two corporals are James Livingstone and Ron Wendel.

Congratulations and thanks to all for taking on the responsibilities of these leadership roles.



Next Meeting

or

April 26, 11:00, Goodhue County Historical Society 1166 Oak Street, Red Wing



Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items.
651-388-2945.

Battery Profiles

Alonzo T. Keene

Alonzo was a good son according to not only his mother and father, but to the neighbors as well.

The family was living on a rented farm in Anoka County, Minnesota, before the war. Alonzo and his father worked the land together. Alonzo also worked around for others and his wages were used to support the family. One neighbor said he knew “positively that the said family were in a great measure dependent upon the said Alonzo T. for their support and were in a great measure supported by him.” The farm was probably not exceptionally profitable as Alonzo’s father said he owned “2 cows and a yoke of oxen and sled besides my household furniture” at the time they were renting the land in Anoka Township.

The Keene family consisted of parents and five children, but only Alonzo and Elenora were living with their parents in Anoka County. Two boys were in Illinois and the oldest daughter was married.

With this as a background, Alonzo may have agreed to enlist as a sure means of an income for the family. He probably knew the man who recruited him. Albert Woodbury was from a prominent family in Anoka and was a lieutenant in the Second Minnesota Battery. He was on a recruiting detail in Minnesota in the summer of 1862 when Alonzo enlisted on August 26th. Lt. Woodbury signed Alonzo’s enlistment papers.

Alonzo was 21 years old, 5’ 10-1/2” tall, with blue eyes, dark hair, and a fair complexion. His birthplace was Dead River, Maine. Alonzo’s muster sheet showed that he received a \$25 bounty for his promise of three years in the Army, but his father later said that Alonzo’s bounty was \$100 and that Alonzo had given it to the family for their support while he was in the Army.

Alonzo sent \$10 home from Fort Snelling as he was waiting to go south to catch up to the Battery. He promised to send \$10 from each month’s pay.

Lt. Woodbury took the 26 new recruits south and met up with the Second Battery on September 27th. The new men were with the unit less than two weeks when the Battery participated in their first real battle at Perryville, Kentucky. It was Alonzo’s baptism of fire and he came through the battle without injury.

A long life in the Army was not in Alonzo’s future. He became ill and died in camp near Nashville, Tennessee, on December 10, 1862. Army reports state Alonzo died of typhoid fever, but his mother simply called it camp fever.

His body was not sent back to Minnesota. Alonzo was probably buried on the field near the camp or perhaps in a local cemetery or church yard. The system of National Cemeteries was not yet fully in place. It is possible Alonzo’s body was removed to the National Cemetery in Nashville at some later time as so many men were. His final resting place “is known only to God.”

A Few Civil War Facts

- The Union Army of 2,100,000 soldiers was nearly twice the size of the Confederate Army of 1,064,000.
- It was the deadliest war in American history. There were around 210,000 soldiers killed in action and 625,000 total dead. (Recent studies suggest this number should be closer to 750,000.)
- Thirty percent of all Southern white males between the ages of 18 and 40 died in the war.
- Around 9 million people lived in the Southern states at the time of the Civil War. Around 3.4m of them were enslaved.
- Sixty six percent of the deaths in the war were due to disease.
- In the Second Battle of Bull run many of the wounded were left on the battle field for 3 to 4 days.
- John and George Crittenden were brothers who were both generals during the war. John for the North and George for the South!
- Lincoln’s famous Gettysburg address was only 269 words long.
- Stonewall Jackson, one of the South’s greatest generals, was killed by friendly fire.
- Lincoln dreamed of getting assassinated only a few days before he was killed by John Wilkes Booth.
- Only 1 in 4 Southern farmers were enslavers, primarily the rich and powerful farmers.

A First Hand Account of Lincoln's Assassination

[A Firsthand Account of Lincoln's Assassination | EBSCO](#) From the EBSCO's Digital Historical Archives

Not even a week after the Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant to end the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865. A remarkable letter written by W.R. Batchelder, who was an eye-witness to the murder and captures the frightful chaos, can be found in EBSCO's digital archives collection. "How can I describe to you," he asked rhetorically, "the scene I witnessed last Friday evening?" His harrowing account bears quoting in full, and is reproduced below:

"I was at Ford's Theatre (Washington) and saw the Murder of President Lincoln. It was a fearful sight, words cannot express the scene. You have undoubtedly read the newspaper accounts which are minutely true. The first I heard, was the crack of a pistol. I thought it was a part of the play, and looked at the part of the stage whence the sound came, and saw a man in black clothes, (in the President's box) waving a large knife over his head, and saying something, (I could only distinguish the words 'The South') and then he jumped to the stage, about twelve feet below; but as he jumped his foot, or spur, caught in the festooning, or flags, about the box and he fell to the stage; but as quick as a flash, he was up and like lightning ran behind the scenes on the stage. In an instant after he was gone, one of the spectators jumped upon the stage, after him, but when he reached the door he saw the assassin mount a horse, and gallop away. If he had, had a pistol, he could have shot him or his horse. It was all done in a minute's time and cannot be told, as quick as the deed was done. Of course the audience were spell-bound, and for an instant no one could move. I realized it all; but for an instant could move neither hand or foot but sat staring at the President's box. In a moment after I collected my thoughts and screamed 'The President is murdered' and ran toward his box. At the same time Mrs. Lincoln screamed and fainted. Perhaps you can judge of the scene that followed, but I doubt it. Ladies fainted, strong men wept, soldiers rushed in, and cleared the house with their bayonets; (but I was at the President's box and was overlooked by the soldiers) and saw him stripped and carried away in an insensible state. The cries of Mrs. Lincoln were frightful to hear. Such a scene I never want to be a witness to again. I cannot to this moment realize the fact that it is real, it seems like a dream, to think that he who came in but a few moments before so full of happiness, smiling and waving at the audience who, cheered, stamped their feet, and waved their handkerchiefs, was so brutally murdered. I cannot realize it."

Batchelder's account was a very personal one – his goal was to relate a shocking and important experience to those who were not there.

But how did the nation as a whole come to make sense of Lincoln's assassination? The popular media – namely, periodicals and newspapers (but also songs and Lincoln's funeral procession itself) – helped people process the traumatic event and make greater sense of it.

In fact, Lincoln's assassination is often credited with, paradoxically, bringing the riven country together after the personal violence inflicted by the Civil War. At the time of his murder, Lincoln was, for a variety of reasons, a deeply unpopular president, having lost the support of even those who had been the most faithful to him. Yet, in the wake of his death, the nation participated in a ritual of collective mourning which brought people together, if not in their opinion of Lincoln, then in their shared grief and suffering.

EBSCO's digital archives product, *American Civil War Periodicals, 1855-1868*, contains countless articles chronicling the nation's mourning of Lincoln. On April 18, 1865, the *Army & Navy Official Gazette* published information about Lincoln's funeral cortege, detailing the order of the official procession of military units followed by the civilian procession, including the names of the pall bearers.

In the days that followed, the funeral procession was staged again and again, as the train carrying Lincoln's body traveled back to his native Springfield, Illinois, for burial. On May 6, 1865, *Harper's Weekly* published detailed engravings showing scenes from Lincoln's life, people gathered around his deathbed, and the funeral procession itself:

"The procession stopped in large and small towns alike, drawing mourners who came to see the body of the fallen president and, as a result, became part of what was a national mourning ritual. Harper's Weekly estimated that millions came out to see the president's remains as they traveled from Washington through Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis and Chicago. They all shared "their deep sense of public loss, and their appreciation of the many virtues which adorned the life of Abraham Lincoln. All classes," the magazine reported, "without distinction of politics or creeds, spontaneously united in the posthumous honors. All hearts seemed to beat as one at the bereavement."

It was not in bringing the Civil War to an end, but actually in his own death, that Lincoln was able to reunite the once divided nation, hearts "beating as one at the bereavement." Echoing the sentiments of many others, *Street and Smith's New York Weekly* wrote on May 11, 1865, "At last there is but one pulsation of the great heart of loyalty; one throb of popular sympathy; one interchange of national emotion!"

Historical Reenactment Sale

LeDuc Historic Estate – May 3, 2025

Are you a historical reenactor? This is your chance to sell or buy items related to many periods of living history.

We welcome historical clothing, accessories, camping gear, antiques, books, art, and other items of interest to fellow reenactors and history enthusiasts, and to the general public. Some restrictions apply, including no firearms or culturally sensitive objects.

Saturday, May 3

Sale hours 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (set up starts at 7:00 am)

LeDuc Historic Estate grounds

1629 Vermillion Street, Hastings, MN

- Reserve your space by **April 25**. Email Sally: sallyanderson99@comcast.net
- Cost is \$10 per table. Please provide your own table(s).
- Tables will be set up outside. You may bring tents or awnings.
- You will price your own items, staff your space, and manage your own sales and payment methods.
- Remove your own unsold items from the site at the end of the sale day.

Sponsored by the Hastings Area Historical Society, in cooperation with the Dakota County Historical Society. This sale is part of the Hastings Citywide Garage Sale/100 Mile Garage Sale weekend.

Questions? Please contact:

Spencer Johnson
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Sally Anderson
sallyanderson99@comcast.net



Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery 2025 Event Schedule

If other events come up during the year that you would like to see considered, please bring them to the attention of the Battery officers.

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|-----------|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| May 8 | Pepin County Historical Society | Durand, WI | Education Day |
| May 16-18 | Fields of Valor - Minnesota & the Civil War Reenactment | Tentative Maplewood, MN | |
| May 26 | 2024 Memorial Day Observance | Red Wing, MN | Memorial Service |
| Jun 21 | A. A. Arnold House | Galesville, WI | Demonstration |
| Jul 26 | Prospect House & Civil War Museum | Tentative , Battle Lake, MN | Demonstration |
| Aug 2 | Whitewater River Fest | Elba, MN | Ceremony |
| Aug 23-24 | 2025 Ahlman's Shooters Roundup | Morristown, MN | Demonstration |
| Sep 13-14 | Civil War Reenactment | Mason City, IA | Reenactment |
| Sep 13-14 | Castlerock Museum | Tentative Alma, WI | Educational Program |
| Nov 11 | 2024 Veterans Day - Veterans Park | Winona, MN | Memorial Service |

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

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

NOTE: There are several events listed as tentative because we are waiting for more information, confirmation of a date or some other decision that needs to be made. Please check meeting minutes prior to the event to confirm the Battery's attendance.

