

## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 330

June 2025

## On This Date-160 Years Ago

### Morning Reports for June 1865

- 1 Sidney G. Norris returned from Hospt.
- 5 C. M. Olsen dropped from rolls Mustered out for Disability May 29/65 from telegraphic order War Dept. dated May 3d 1865.
- 17 Lieut. Joel T. Davis absent with 68 men whose term of service expires on or before Oct. 1st at A. C. M. 4th Division D. C.
- 19 Detachment of men sent to Knoxville to be mustered out, returned to the comm'd, Fre'd Beebe returned to Com'd
- 22 Sergt. Geo. W. Tilton Mustered as 1st Lieut. to date June 15/65. Corp. W. A. Spaulding promoted to Sergt. to date June 15/65. Joseph L. Sargent promoted to Corp./vice W. A. Spaulding promoted, to date June 15/65.

## Thank You Note

We received the following note (and a check!) from the site coordinator at Maplewood Area Historical Society. It's nice to hear good things about our activities at an event!

*Dear Members of the 2nd MN Battery, 5/20/25  
Thank you all for your dedication, time, Commitment, and passion to telling the story of Minnesota and the Civil War. Our inaugural Fields of Valor: Civil War History weekend was a huge success because of you! The cannon, quilts, and presentations by the 2nd Minnesota members were a highlight of the weekend. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!  
We hope you will join us again next year!  
Good Things,  
T.J.*

## Upcoming Events

### June 21 A. A. Arnold House, Galesville WI

Arrive by 9am to set up, the event starts at 10:00am. A change this year is that the Arnold House is the featured event of the day, no longer a part of Founders Day. It is hoped this will bring more people to the site for the day. Pack a bag lunch or purchase stew at the site. We will bring the M1861 10 Pdr Parrott Rifle and Limber. The event organizers have asked the ladies to bring quilts and our apothecary. Other stations are welcome if someone would like to showcase something special!

### July 1 Concert in the Park Menomonie, WI

The annual concert by the Ludington Guard Band in the Wilson Park band shell (Wilson Ave & 8th Street). Members are invited to join Battery I 1st US Artillery for the 1812 Overture. We will need crew members for the M1841 12 Pdr. Mountain Howitzer and crew to fill in on additional cannons of Battery I. 5:30pm arrival for setup, concert at 7:00pm.



Photo from the 2022 concert.

## Next Meeting

**June 28, 11:00, Goodhue County Historical Society** 1166 Oak Street, Red Wing



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

# Battery Profiles

## Moses W. Adley

Moses Adley was born in Waterford, Maine. He was farming in Sauk Center, Stearns County, Minnesota, in 1862 when he enlisted with the Battery. He was single, blue eyes, hair and a light complexion. He was 5 foot, 8 1/4 inches tall.

On June 24, 1863, Moses was sent to the field hospital where he remained until he returned to duty on September 22, 1863. He returned just after the battle at Chickamauga Creek.

Moses re-enlisted in Rossville, Georgia. In December of that year, he was detailed to cut logs for the garrison in Tennessee. He reported back for duty on April 5, 1865 and was mustered out with the Battery in August of 1865.

Moses married Lucy on August 14, 1867, in Stearns County where he had returned after the war. Moses and Lucy never had children. By 1890, they moved to Maine Township, Otter Tail County, Minnesota.

In his application for pension, it was noted that Moses had lost an eye in an accident "36 years ago by an ox striking me with his horn," making the loss around 1856. This is probably incorrect as no mention of having only one eye was made in his military records and it is doubtful he would have been accepted into the service with only one eye. Moses claimed a disability for "chronic Diarrhea and piles, Rheumatism, Heart disease." A Battery comrade, Edward Bloomfield, signed an affidavit for Moses. Edward wrote that the illness Moses suffered was "caused by exposure in camp life, from which his health has ever since been impaired." Edward said the trouble Moses suffered began at while the Battery was near Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Moses was a member of the G.A.R., though the post he attended is unknown. He lived for a while with his half brother in the state of Washington and was living with his niece in Minneapolis when he died in 1905, April 9—Appomattox Day.

He is buried in the southwest corner of the Silent Vale Cemetery in Maine where he shares a stone with his wife. The inscription reads: "Civil War Veteran."



### *Battle Lake Review*

April 14, 1905

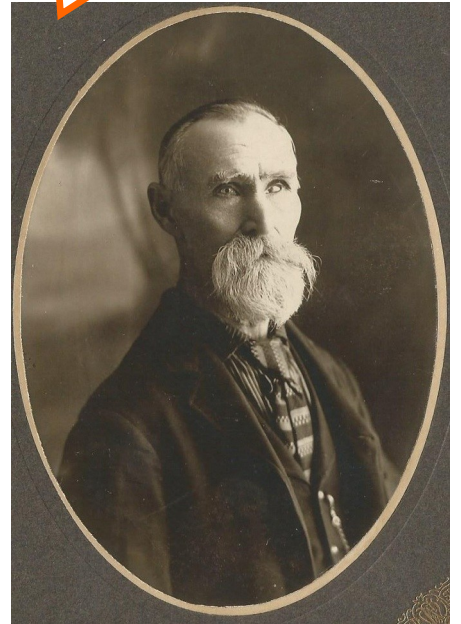
### *Death of Moses W. Adley*

The community was saddened when on Monday a telegram was received announcing the sudden death of Moses W. Adley, formerly of Maine but of late of Minneapolis, on Sunday April 9th. Mr. Adley lived for many years with his invalid wife in the town of Maine (Otter Tail County, Minnesota). Mrs. Adley passed away about ten years ago and since her death Mr. Adley had gradually failed in health. He spent several years with his brother at Spokane, Wash., but of late years has made his home with relatives in Minneapolis. Mr. Adley was a member of the G.A.R. and highly respected by all who knew him. He had many relatives in Maine who will mourn his loss. Mr. Adley was about 75 years of age. The remains were brought to Maine on Wednesday and laid at rest by his wife's side.

\*Photo was shared with us by Paul Adley. Paul's great-great-grandfather, Napoleon Adley, was the half brother of Moses.

Moses has been featured here before, but now—thanks to a descendant—we have his picture!

light





# ***A Terrible Tragedy in June of 1864***

From: A Daily Dose of History Facebook post

On the morning of June 17, 1864, Thomas Brown, the pyrotechnist at the Washington Arsenal, packed about 800 “stars”—explosives designed to be fired above a battlefield like flares, to illuminate it at night. The stars Brown was creating that day were going to be sent to Federal soldiers in the field, but not to be used as flares. Instead, they were going to be part of the army camp fireworks celebrations on the Fourth of July.

The explosive material inside the stars was encased in wet clay, which formed a hard shell when it hardened. When Brown had finished encasing the stars, he carried them on trays out into the front yard of the Arsenal and set them in the sun to dry. Inside the Arsenal, just a few feet away from the trays of stars, 30 girls and young women, mostly Irish immigrants, were packing cartridges—paper tubes filled with gunpowder. Their job was to push a bullet into the cartridge, then twist the paper shut at the top, a process called “choking.” It was a dangerous, low-paying job and workplace rules were strict. The women were not allowed to talk. That morning one girl, after being told twice by the supervisor to stop talking, spoke again. Fed up, the supervisor discharged her on the spot and sent her home. Her talkativeness may have saved the girl’s life.

Brown had left his trays of drying stars unattended and the temperature in Washington that day soared to over 90 degrees. The pans eventually became so hot that one of the stars detonated, setting off a chain reaction of hundreds of explosions. It was so hot that day that the Arsenal’s windows were open, in hopes of letting in a breeze. Sparks from the exploding stars flew into the Arsenal through the open windows, igniting the gunpowder on the floor and workbenches, and triggering a massive explosion.

The workers who weren’t killed instantly scrambled for the doors; their escapes impeded by the heavy workbenches that stretched across the Arsenal floor. As style and decorum dictated at the time, the women all wore long, loose-fitting dresses. Their long flowing dresses caught fire easily and many of the girls were in flames by the time they made it outside. Although nearby men raced to the scene to help the victims, several suffering severe burns as they tried to save the burning women, nearly all of the women working in the choking room that day never had a chance.



Twenty-one girls and young women were killed in the disaster. The youngest was 12 years old. Even amidst the daily carnage of the Civil War, the tragedy horrified the nation and was reported in both northern and southern newspapers. President Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton attended the funeral. Reporting on the funeral, the *Daily Morning Chronicle* wrote, “These poor girls died stainlessly, in the midst of youth and beauty; died in their efforts to maintain themselves and their parents; died with the June flowers perfuming the air...” The families of each of the dead girls

received \$9.50, about \$250 in today’s money.

Within days of the catastrophe Arsenal employees began raising money for a memorial to the victims. When they had raised \$3,000, the funds were used to purchase a 25-foot-tall monument, which was erected in the Congressional Cemetery in 1865. The names of the 21 girls and women who died are inscribed on the base of the monument. Atop it is a feminine figure representing Grief.

The coroner’s inquest jury concluded that “the superintendent, Thomas B. Brown, was guilty of the most culpable carelessness and negligence in placing highly combustible substances so near a building filled with human beings, indicating a most reckless disregard for life.” Other than the coroner’s reprimand, there were no repercussions. Brown didn’t even lose his job at the Arsenal.

The photo on the right is the Arsenal Monument in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington D.C. The photo above is of women who worked at the Arsenal, some of whom were killed in the explosion



# Recap

## **May 8 Pepin County Historical Society, Durand, WI**

We filled the grounds with five stations for students to rotate through followed by two hours of public visitation. With a change in which Battery members could attend, we changed up our stations. Mrs. Wendel and Sgt. Duden shared the inside station talking about soldier life and women's roles in the 1860s. Ms. Linnea, Ms. Becky and Ms. Stacy took over the laundry and SAS station with assistance from



Ms. Lisa!. Ms. Linnea did a wonderful job on the washboard! Mrs. Wendel did have a few minutes of "geek out" when she learned that she was speaking about women's rights very in the same place where Susan B. Anthony spoke in 1873! It made up for the MIA underdrawers she was so frustrated with!! The day was dry and a bit cool, but the students had great questions and were excellent listeners. Even better was the addition of the Grams family on our gun crew!



## **May 16-18 Fields of Valor - Minnesota & the Civil War, Maplewood, MN**

It was a cold event, but dry! Camp was set up beside and the ladies set up their quilt display inside the historic barn on the Maplewood Area Historical Society's grounds. Our gun crew ran two drills with firings each day to the delight of the crowd and neighbors. One visitor said he heard the gun from his house and had to come over to see what was going on! The ladies had to do a little last minute scramble as there was a sudden change in location, but inside the barn was out of the wind on Saturday, so a little warmer and kept them from wrapping up in their quilts! Visitors who came were very interested in the quilts and the gun, so we talked a lot to many people! This was a first time ever event and the organizers were pleased with the event and attendance. The plan is to have another Civil War event in 2026!



***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:***

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

## **May 26 2024 Memorial Day Observance, Red Wing, MN**

Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery Light Artillery once again participated in the annual Memorial Day Observance at East Bay Point Park in Red Wing, MN. This year, the Battery provided one of the color guards for the entrance parade. During the ceremony, Bruce Arnoldy read Logan's Proclamation and Rhondalynn Bartlett participated in the floral tribute. Following the musical interludes and patriotic speeches, the names of fifty-two veterans from Red Wing who departed since last Memorial Day were read and honored with artillery and rifle salutes. Battery members who served the M1861 Parrott Rifle to fire our three-round salute were Neil Bruce, Bruce Arnoldy, Mikaela Livingstone, Michael Ritchie, John Cain, James Livingstone and Daryl Duden. Included among the numerous people who attended this year's ceremony were members Carmen Arnoldy and Steve Savre. Submitted by Sgt. Daryl Duden