

2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

"ACTION FRONT"

Circular No. 333

September 2025

On This Date-160 Years Ago

Hotchkiss Farewell Speech

Hd. Qrs 2d Battery Lt. Arty Minnesota Vol.
Fort Snelling, August 12(?) 1865
Special Orders
No. 36

Officers and Soldiers of the 2d Battery Light Artillery Minnesota Vet. Vols., the time has arrived for your disbandment as a military organization. Your Commanding Officer, in taking leave of you, cannot refrain from an expression of his high appreciation of your courage, endurance, and soldierly conduct during over three years of perilous hardship on the battlefield, on the march, in the bivouac and through various other conditions imposed upon you by the terms of the service in actual war. Your military record is unsurpassed by any troops who have entered the field to defend our government against a wicked rebellion.

The 2d Minnesota Battery has never failed in an emergency, however trying to the courage of brave men; it had never failed to silence the enemy's Artillery -- has always severely punished the enemy column, engaged in fifteen different contests, some of them the most difficult in the history of the war. It has never lost a gun or a carriage of any kind, no matter what the emergency(?) of the battle. You have always met the highest expectations of your commanding officer and received the commendation of his superior officers.

Soldiers! You are about to return to the peaceful pursuit as citizens in which capacity I believe you will prove to be as true men as you have been soldiers. In the future remember what you did commissioned with the duty perpetuating an individual record unsurpassed by the heroes of any age, and that, what you have done in arms for the defense of law and order and good government is hereafter to be done by example and through the ballot-box. -- A chance for patriotic effort which ought to engage your most serious thought and noblest intentions(?)

Comrades! Cherish the memory of each other with a true soldier's love. Embrace the memory of those of our companions who have fallen by casualties in battle and disease in your most sacred affections.

As Soldiers, your commanding officer bids you an affectionate farewell hoping that in the future, happiness and prosperity may be the fruits of your labors.

Wm. Augustus Hotchkiss
Cap't, Com'd 2d Minn. Battery

Upcoming Events

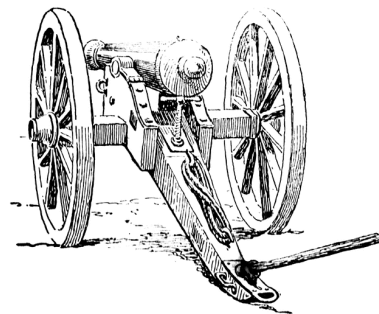
Sept 13-14 Mason City, Iowa

**"The Battle of Belmont, Missouri" in
East Park, 802 3rd St NE, Mason City, IA,
presented by the Mason City Civil War Council**

It has been a number of years since our Battery last attended a Civil War reenactment in Mason City and we are excited to return. Battle demonstrations will be held on Saturday and Sunday at 1:00pm followed by Medical Demonstrations. There will be a Period Ball on Saturday at 7:00pm. Period Sutlers and food vendors are scheduled to be on site. We will bring our M1861 10 Pdr Parrott Rifle with Limber and serve on the Federal side during the battle demonstrations.

IF YOU PLAN TO BE THERE and have not notified Daryl or John, DO SO IMMEDIATELY! We need to know who is coming to make appropriate meal plans.

The event has a Facebook page, but info on it is limited. [Facebook](#) That link should take you to their page or else, search Mason City Civil War Council.



Next Meeting

**September 6, 11:00, Goodhue County
Historical Society 1166 Oak Street, Red Wing**

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



Battery Profiles

John McCausland

John was a skilled machinist working in the growing community of St. Anthony when the Civil War broke out. When he enlisted on December 4, 1861, the Second Battery did not yet exist. William Hotchkiss was organizing the Battery with intentions of commanding it and was recruiting men among his friends and acquaintances. John was one of the men who agreed to serve with Captain Hotchkiss.

John was 33 years old, born in Hallwell County, Maine. He had a dark complexion, brown hair, hazel eyes, and stood 5' 8" tall. He was single.

A machinist would have brought handy skills to the Battery and its equipment, so it did not take long until John was promoted to sergeant. Those same skills would have been valuable to other parts of the army as well, and on February 20, 1864, John was transferred to the Pioneer Brigade in charge constructing bridges, erecting fortifications, clearing roads and other such tasks.

John's abilities made him stand out even in the skilled ranks of the Pioneer Brigade. It was less than a month after his transfer that letters began flying between commanding officers. John's services were wanted on the riverboats and he wanted to serve on them. It was his prewar friend who wrote the final letter of recommendation for John to be sent to the boats.

Captain Hotchkiss wrote: *Sergeant John McCausland of my 2 Battery Light Artillery Minnesota Vols., a No. Steamboat Engineer and Machinist, is desirous of obtaining a position as Engineer on some one of the Steamboats running on the waters in this or other Department over which you may have controll. He is a reliable man and will not disappoint any reasonable expectations as an Engineer and Machinist. From my own personal Knowledge of him before his enlisting in my command I can positively state it as my belief that you could get no more thorough machinist or competent Engineer. He has run boats on the western waters with perfect satisfaction to the public and employers. If you can give him an Engineer position on one of your boats he will prove himself worth of your entire confidence. Hoping you will find a place for Sergeant McCausland, I am, Sir, Most Respectfully Yours.* The letter was signed by William Hotchkiss.

What happened next is unclear as no records yet found tell where John served. The next recorded event for John is the record of his death at the General Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on January 25, 1865. John had contracted small pox and the disease proved fatal.

Small pox was not understood and greatly feared during the Civil War. Those who were suspected of having the disease were sent to special small pox wards or hospitals. If they died from the disease, they were buried in separate cemeteries for fear they might still pass on the deadly disease. John's body

was probably buried in one of these small pox cemeteries and anything he had with him burned. Thus, he left no effects when he died. Most of the military victims of small pox were disinterred after the war and moved to the National Cemetery in Chattanooga. Unfortunately, the identities of many of these men were lost in the process. John probably lies under one of the many stones marked "Unknown Soldier" in the Chattanooga National Cemetery.



Chattanooga National Cemetery

PARTING SHOT

A Patriotic Accessory



WHEN WAR HAD BROKEN OUT, Rebecca Pomroy, 43, a Boston native, wrote to Dorothea Dix, superintendent of army nurses, offering her services. Thus started Pomroy's notable career as a military nurse. Almost immediately upon reaching Washington, she was put in charge of a ward of typhoid patients at Georgetown Hospital. In early 1862, when the president's wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, was sick and their son Tad fell critically ill with typhoid, Dix recommended Pomroy to nurse them back to health, which she did. In response, a grateful Abraham Lincoln reportedly said to her, "Tell your grandchildren how indebted the nation was to you in holding up my hands in time of trouble." Pomroy was called again to the White House in 1864 to nurse Mrs. Lincoln after she suffered a fall from her carriage.

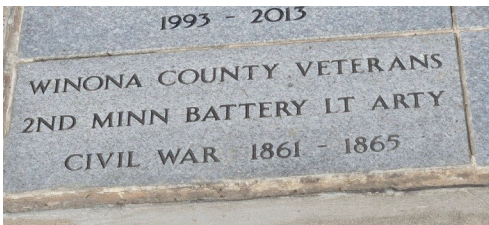
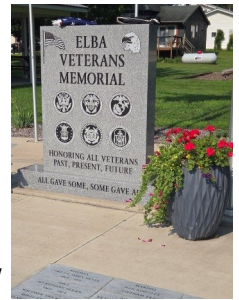
During her wartime service, Pomroy—whose sole surviving son was in the Union army—wore a pair of patriotic metal earrings, one of which is shown here. Decorated with red, white, and blue enamel and adorned with the word "Union," they made clear her loyalties. By war's end, Pomroy was said to have cared for more than 700 patients. She died in 1884 at 66.

LILJENQUIST FAMILY COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Recap

August 2 Whitewater Riverfest, Elba, MN

Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery once again fired a three-round salute in honor and memory of veterans during the 10:30am ceremony at the Veterans Memorial in Elba MN. The attendance was modestly smaller than in previous years as the weekend featured a twelve-team softball tournament three blocks from the memorial rather than a volleyball tournament on the monument grounds. The weather couldn't have been much better. The temperature was in the low 70s when the program began. Battery members wore their jackets for the ceremony. Krystal Marking, representing Elba Community Outreach, served as master of ceremonies and the sequencing of events was quite unusual. The program began with the raising of the US flag accompanied by a local vocalist's wonderful rendition of the National Anthem, followed by a brief prayer and then we fired our three-round salute. Immediately following our third round TAPS was sounded and then the Keynote Speaker, retired United States Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Laurie Yankosky, was introduced. She enlisted in the United States Air Force 1983 and served a 20-year career instructing, teaching, training, evaluating and directing. When she retired from active duty she returned to her childhood home of Plainview to pursue her second career as a teacher. She taught in Plainview-Elgin-Millville elementary for twenty years, retiring from teaching in 2023 and now serves on their school board. The program ended with a thank you from Krystal Marking, a brief prayer, and Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA" playing over the loudspeaker as we departed. Battery members participating on the gun crew were Neil Bruce, Bruce Arnoldy, John Cain, Michael Ritchie and Daryl Duden.



Aug 23-24 Morristown MN

Members of the 2nd Minnesota Battery travelled to Morristown MN to participate in what has become an annual event for the Battery. This was our 20th appearance inside Fort Ahlman during Ahlman's Shooters Roundup. We set up our tents and flies inside the fort and our firing demonstrations are conducted in front of the bleachers just outside the fort. We fire two rounds during each demonstration, one with detail and one without. The event timing for Sunday was changed this year, ending at 3:00pm, which allowed us to begin packing up two hours earlier than usual. Our demonstrations were conducted at 9:30am, 11:30am, 2:30pm and 4:00pm on Saturday, with Sunday adjusted to eliminate the 4:00pm firing. The temperature was cooler than we typically experience at Ahlman's, so Battery members wore their wool jackets during most firing demonstrations. The cooler temperatures didn't significantly reduce the gun crew's visits to Waseca Sno-Biz for a shaved ice following our firing demonstration. It was wonderful to continue to see all three



bleachers full at almost every demonstration. Many of the folks we talk to following our demonstrations look forward to seeing us every year. Battery members who attended this event were Bruce Arnoldy, Mardelle Arnoldy, Carmen Arnoldy, Steve Savre, Teresa "Patience" Bergdale, Vince "Harley" Bergdale, Neil Bruce, John Cain, Daryl Duden, Bart Hoekstra, James Livingstone, Mikaela Livingstone, Michael Ritchie, Thomas Schmit and Linnea Schmit.

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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