

MINNESOTA *and the* CIVIL WAR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

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Images and online media kit at www.mnhs.org/civilwarmedia.

Minnesota's Role in the Civil War Is Focus of New Minnesota History Center Exhibit

“Minnesota and the Civil War” opens March 2, 2013 and is part of the Society’s multi-year Civil War commemoration.

ST. PAUL (December 2012) - The Civil War divided the United States, left more than 750,000 dead and resulted in the release of 4 million enslaved people. A volatile mixture of political divisions, personal beliefs and economic disparities exploded into war in 1861, and lasted four bloody years. Through it all, Minnesotans played key roles.

“Minnesota and the Civil War,” March 2 - Sept. 8, 2013, is an exhibit that draws on the stories of men eager to enlist, like 15-year-old Charley Goddard who lied about his age in order to fight; Minnesotans in battle, including the heroic actions of the First Minnesota Regiment at Gettysburg and the capture of the battle flag of the 28th Virginia Regiment; and personal experiences in the war, especially well told by the Christie brothers, whose numerous letters and diary entries are among the great treasures of the Minnesota Historical Society.

There are also stories about enslaved people like Eliza Winston who was brought to Minnesota by her owner, but who on arrival sought to gain her freedom; Frances Clayton, who dressed as a man in order to fight alongside her husband; and Minnesota’s claim to the first soldier to enlist and the last surviving Union veteran. These stories and more are profiled in the Exhibit Experience pages in this press kit.

Told through more than 170 artifacts, letters, diaries, memoirs and reminiscences, the exhibit captures the personal impact of this tumultuous period. “As a state, Minnesota played an important role in this nation-defining war,” observed Stephen Elliott, Minnesota Historical Society director and CEO. “We will portray the incredible personal sacrifices—on the battlefield, in military service and on the homefront—that so deeply affected families and communities in Minnesota and throughout the nation. The war kept intact the nation whose guarantees of personal liberty and opportunities for security and success we enjoy today.”

Visitors can explore the exhibit on opening day while enjoying live music from the Civil War era and arts and crafts from noon to 4 p.m. Two larger family day programs will be offered in May and July:

Civil War Family Day

Saturday, May 4, 2013 • Noon–4 p.m. • \$6-11, MHS members FREE.

Hands-on activities, music, demonstrations and an appearance by nationally-known Lincoln actor, Fritz Klein.

Gettysburg Anniversary

Monday–Thursday, July 1–4, 2013 • Times & prices vary

A four-day commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and the fall of Vicksburg.

Activities include a re-enactment and military encampment, a lecture by historian Richard Moe, soldier tributes, Civil War era music, games, fashion and an ice cream social.

The Society's multi-year commemoration of the Civil War continues through 2015 and includes public and educational programs, publications, collections, videos and online content which can be accessed at www.mnhs.org/civilwar. To learn more about the Society's commemoration of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, visit www.usdakotawar.org. In addition, beginning in January 2013, follow @MNCivilWar on Twitter and learn about events of the war as they unfold in real time.

Credit

"Minnesota and the Civil War" is funded in part by the Legacy Amendment's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on Nov. 4, 2008.

Hours and location

The Minnesota History Center is located at 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul. Exhibit gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays (admission is free on Tuesdays from 5 to 8 p.m.), 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. Auxiliary aids and services are available with advance notice. For more information, call 651-259-3000 or 1-800-657-3773.

Admission

Admission to "Minnesota and the Civil War" is included with regular History Center admission of \$11 for adults, \$9 for seniors and college students, \$6 for children ages 6 to 17; free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.

The Minnesota History Center holds the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society. The History Center is home to an innovative museum, engaging public programs, a research library, distinctive gift shops and an award-winning restaurant.

The Minnesota Historical Society is a non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1849. The Society collects, preserves and tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs and book publishing. Using the power of history to transform lives, the Society preserves our past, shares our state's stories and connects people with history.

The Minnesota Historical Society is supported in part by its Premier Partners: Xcel Energy and Explore Minnesota Tourism.

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“Minnesota and the Civil War” Exhibit Experience

Exhibit opens March 2, 2013.

The cornerstone of the Society’s commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the U.S. Civil War will be an interactive exhibit at the Minnesota History Center, March 2 - Sept. 8, 2013. This exhibit features more than 170 artifacts; four multimedia experiences where visitors can hear firsthand accounts about the patriotic fervor of enlisting and fighting; letters written to loved ones at home; the experience of battle; and the legacy that followed. Also, a telegraph interactive allows visitors to type out a message as if they were sending commands to or from the battlefield.

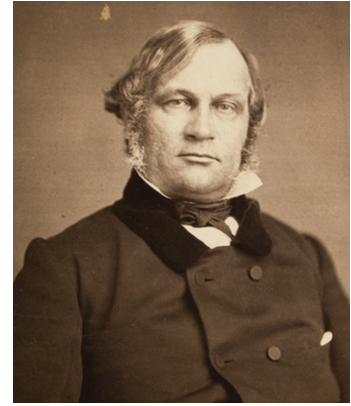
Stories will be told using firsthand accounts from letters, diaries, newspapers and other ephemera. Along the way, visitors can explore significant personal and military artifacts of the time. Stories include:

Aaron Greenwald, a 28-year-old miller from Anoka was the first in the country to volunteer for the Union. Albert Woolson, of Duluth, a drummer and bugler, was the last surviving Union veteran in the country. He died at age 109 on Aug. 2, 1956.



Left to Right: Pvt. Greenwald 1862, Albert Woolson about 1950, a Civil War bugle. Woolson image courtesy University of Minnesota Duluth, the rest MHS Collections.

Governor Alexander Ramsey, who upon hearing of the attack on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, pledged the first volunteer troops in the country to fight for the Union. They became the First Minnesota Volunteer Regiment of Infantry.



Left to Right: First Minnesota ambrotype, May 21, 1861; drum presented to Peter Hoffman who mustered into the First Minnesota on May 31, 1861; Gov. Alexander Ramsey, 1860. First Minnesota ambrotype courtesy Wayne Jorgenson, drum and Ramsey image MHS Collections.

Charley Goddard, who at age 15 was so eager to join the war effort that he lied about his age on his enlistment form. Upon discovery of his age, he was discharged, but refused to leave the war. When injured, his mother arrived at the hospital in Philadelphia to care for him. An actor portraying Charley Goddard will bring this story to life in 10-minute performances in the exhibit and in 45-minute History Player performances for schools.



Left to Right: Charles Goddard, 1861; Goddard discharge papers, about May 1862. MHS Collections.

Elizabeth “Lizzie” Bowler and her soldier husband, James Madison Bowler, wrote nearly 300 letters during the war. In the letters they talk about love, Lizzie describes their new baby, and they argue over their differing ideas about duty, with Lizzie insisting that Madison should be at home with family.



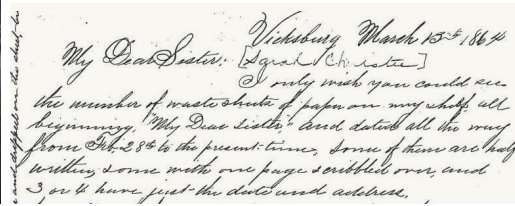
Left to Right: James Madison Bowler and Elizabeth Bowler, about 1862; baby carriage about 1860. MHS Collections.



Testimony from Eliza Winston, an enslaved African-American who, in 1860, was brought by her owners from Mississippi to the Winslow House hotel in St. Anthony. Winston looked to meet with freed blacks in Minnesota who might help her get her freedom.

Left: Winslow House, 1860. MHS Collections.

David, Thomas and Alexander Christie wrote wartime letters to their sister, mother and to each other. The letters are very detailed and speak in eloquent language of battles, boredom and homesickness.



Left to Right: David, Thomas and Alexander Christie, October 1880; letter dated Vicksburg, March 1864, from Thomas to his sister Sarah. MHS Collections.

Col. William Colvill, from Goodhue Co., led the First Minnesota into battle at Gettysburg. Colvill was wounded but went on to become Minnesota Attorney General and a state representative. Two hundred sixty-two Minnesota soldiers fought at Gettysburg; only 47 survived.



Left to Right: Col. William Colvill, about 1863; Colvill's sword and scabbard made in 1850 by Ames Manufacturing Co. in Chicopee, Mass. MHS Collections.

An eyewitness account tells of the daring capture of the battle flag of the 28th Virginia Regiment by the First Minnesota at Gettysburg. First Sergeant Matthew Marvin was one of the wounded at Gettysburg, saying of his injury "I have got about all the pain I can stand." He mustered into the First Minnesota on April 29, 1861 and was wounded three times; at Bull Run, Harrison's Landing and Gettysburg, before being mustered out on May 5, 1864.



Left to Right: 28th Virginia Regiment battle flag; "Battle of Gettysburg" oil painting by Rufus Fairchild Zogbaum, this painting hangs in the Governor's Reception Room at the Minnesota State Capitol; canteen used by Matthew Marvin of the First Minnesota, 1861-1865; a confederate percussion rifle made between 1850-1860 by Henry E. Leman of Lancaster, Penn. MHS Collections.



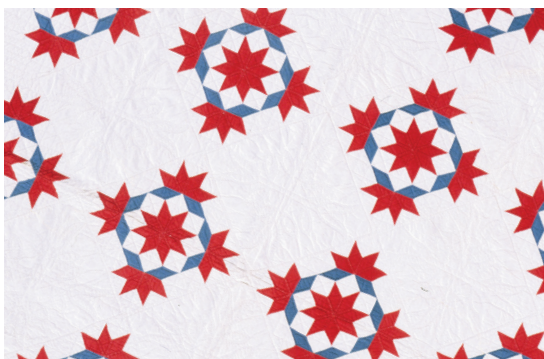
A report from the "St. Paul Daily Press" described Frances Clayton who was so determined to fight in the war alongside her husband, she dressed up in a man's uniform and mustered in Co. A 13th Missouri Cavalry. According to the newspaper she fought at the battle of Shiloh and Murfreesboro where her husband was killed in action. An estimated 400 women disguised themselves as soldiers during the war.

Left: Frances Clayton about 1864. Courtesy Library of Congress.



Josiah Chaney remarked on the bad taste of hardtack or hard bread which was made to last and be nutritious. Chaney longed for what he called "good light bread!!!"

Left: Civil War hardtack, 1861-1864. MHS Collections.



Emilina Bistodeau, from St. Anthony and later Dayton, Minn., along with five other women made a Yankee Pride patterned quilt by machine and hand.

Left: Detail of star patterned quilt made by Emilina Bistodeau, 1864. MHS Collections.

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Follow Minnesotans in the Civil War on Twitter in 2013

Learn about events of the Civil War from Minnesotans' perspectives through real-time tweets

ST. PAUL (December 2012) - Beginning in January 2013 and continuing to the anniversary of the end of the Civil War in 2015, Minnesota Historical Society staff will tweet about events of the war as they unfold, through the voices of Minnesota soldiers, wives, newspaper reporters and others. Followers of the Twitter account @MNCivilWar will learn about the real lives and struggles of Minnesotans involved in the war.

Through their words as collected from diaries, letters and other firsthand accounts, Minnesotans will retell their wartime tales in real-time, 150 years later. From the casual history fan to the Civil War buff, anyone who is interested in the stories of those who lived during the Civil War will be interested in following these tweets.

The tweeting will begin on Jan. 1, 2013, the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln. As the country approached its third year of the war, the proclamation declared "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." Accounts of Minnesotans and newspaper reports at the time will give a glimpse into how the Proclamation was received.

Also beginning in January, Twitter followers will learn about Minnesotans such as James Madison Bowler and Elizabeth Caleff Bowler, newlyweds who corresponded during the four years of the Civil War. While Madison served with the Third Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment and 113th U.S. Colored Infantry, "Lizzie" held down the fort in Nininger, Minn. During the war Madison wrote to Lizzie about his experiences as a soldier. Tweeted excerpts of their letters will illustrate the horrors of the war as well as the difficulties of life back at home in Minnesota.

Other events to be tweeted will include battles at Chancellorsville, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Chattanooga and Nashville; the New York draft riots; Lee's surrender; and Lincoln's assassination. In addition to tweeting major events of the war, followers will see what life was like when soldiers weren't fighting, what families at home on the prairie were struggling with and what Minnesota newspapers were reporting.

For more information about the project, a list of character bios, events to be tweeted and a live feed of the tweets (beginning Jan. 1, 2013), visit www.mnhs.org/civilwar.

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Public and Educational Programs

Connecting the Past to the Future.

The Society's multi-year commemoration of the Civil War continues through 2015 with a series of public and educational programs. For more details and additional listings visit www.mnhs.org/civilwar.

Programs at the Minnesota History Center (unless otherwise noted)

- **History Lounge: Minnesota, Voting Rights and the Civil War**
Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2013 • 7 p.m. • FREE
Historian Bill Green discusses one of the most tempestuous eras in Minnesota history, when battles over freedom, race and the vote raged through the state, echoing the national fight that would lead to the U.S. Civil War. www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/lounge.
- **History Forum Lectures • This Fiery Trial: The U.S. Civil War**
Monthly Saturdays through March 2013 • 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. • \$14/\$10 MHS members.
Tickets at 651-259-3015 or www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/forum.
Six nationally-known historians take on the topic of the Civil War.
- **Civil War Exhibit Opening Day**
Saturday, March 2, 2013 • Noon-4 p.m. • \$6-11, MHS members FREE.
Explore the exhibit on opening day while enjoying live music from the Civil War era and arts and crafts.
- **The North Star is for Union! Minnesota and the Civil War**
Saturday, March 2, 2013 • 2 p.m. • FREE
A lecture by Hognander Award-winning historian Mary Lethert Wingerd. Reservations at 651-259-3015 or www.minnesotahistorycenter.org.
- **History of Hip: Industry of Death • Held at the Turf Club, St. Paul**
Tuesday, March 5, 2013 • 7:30-9 p.m. • \$5, MHS members FREE.
Explore popular commercial ventures related to death and mourning that developed in the years following the Civil War. www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/hip.
- **History Lounge: Joel Whitney - Minnesota's Civil War Photographer**
Tuesday, March 19, 2013 • 7 p.m. • FREE
MHS Curator Adam Scher will explore the life and work of this pioneering photographer.
www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/lounge.

- **Soldiers' Stories • Veterans Free Day**
Saturday, March 23, 2013 • Noon–4 p.m. • \$6-11; MHS members and Veterans and their families FREE.
Learn how soldiers have kept in touch with the homefront from the Civil War to today. At 2 p.m. meet Civil War historian and collector Wayne Jorgenson, author of “Every Man Did His Duty; Pictures and Stories of the Men of the First Minnesota.”
- **An Evening with Abraham Lincoln**
Thursday, May 2, 2013 • 7 p.m. • \$15/\$11 MHS members.
A portrayal by nationally-known Lincoln actor, Fritz Klein. Reservations at 651-259-3015 or www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/civilwar
- **Civil War Family Day**
Saturday, May 4, 2013 • Noon–4 p.m. • \$6-11, MHS members FREE.
Hands-on activities, music, demonstrations and an appearance by nationally-known Lincoln actor, Fritz Klein.
www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/civilwar
- **Seniors in Mind: Music of the Civil War**
Tuesday, May 14 • 10:30 a.m. • FREE
Featuring Diane Ferlatte and Erik Pearson. Reservations at 651-259-3015 or www.minnesotahistorycenter.org/seniorsinmind
- **Gettysburg Anniversary Commemorations**
Monday–Thursday, July 1–4, 2013 • Times & prices vary.
A four-day salute to the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and the fall of Vicksburg. Activities include a re-enactment and military encampment, a lecture by historian Richard Moe, soldier tributes, Civil War era music, games, fashion and an ice cream social.
- **U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 Exhibit**
Through Sept. 8, 2013 • FREE with admission.
Learn about the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, its causes and its aftermath. Visit www.usdakotawar.org for a list of initiatives, events and resources for commemorating and learning about the war.

Programs at the Minnesota State Capitol

Completed in 1905, the State Capitol memorializes Minnesota’s Civil War veterans through paintings, statues, original regimental flags and other artifacts.

- **Daily Guided Tours of the Capitol**
Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; Sunday, 1–3 p.m. • Tours leave on the hour • Free with suggested donation of \$5.
45-minute tours include stops in the Governor’s Reception Room to see Civil War-themed paintings by noted American artists and the Rotunda to see the current display of recently conserved battle flags from the Civil and Spanish American wars.
- **Civil War History Tour**
Friday, Jan. 25, 2013 • 7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 16 & Mar. 16, 2013 • 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
Saturday, May 25, Sept. 28 & Nov. 30, 2013 • 11 a.m.
\$6-9/\$2 discount for MHS members.
Take an in-depth tour to learn about Minnesota’s role in the war and the Capitol’s Civil War artifacts. Reservations required.

- **Civil War Family Day**
Thursday, Dec. 27, 2012 • 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Saturday, July 6 & Friday, Dec. 27, 2013 • 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
\$5/\$3 MHS members.
Sample hardtack, go on a scavenger hunt, make a miniature battle flag and try on military equipment.
- **Civil War History Camp**
Thursday, July 11, 2013 • 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • \$60/\$50 MHS members.
Campers age 9-12 learn what Civil War soldiers wore, make a newspaper page and a battle map, and more.

Programs at Historic Fort Snelling

Built in the early 1820s, Fort Snelling served as a training center for Minnesota's Civil War troops. It is also the location where Dred and Harriet Scott lived as enslaved people in the 1840s. This fact-that the Scotts had been moved to Fort Snelling, in a territory where slavery was prohibited-became the basis of Dred Scott's lawsuit seeking his freedom. The 1857 U.S. Supreme Court decision that ended Scott's suit inflamed the national debate about slavery.

- **Civil War Weekend: 1863: Year of Decision**
Saturday & Sunday, Aug. 17 & 18, 2013 • 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • \$6-11, MHS members FREE.
See what Fort Snelling was like as an 1860s training center for Minnesota's Civil War troops, with re-enactors, military drills and weapons displays.
- **Military History Timeline**
Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 2013 • 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • \$6-11, MHS members FREE.
Honor America's soldiers by exploring military life with a living timeline. Costumed interpreters represent the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, and other wars through displays of uniforms and equipment and demonstrations of weapons.

Additional historic sites that have a special connection to the Civil War

- **Alexander Ramsey House, St. Paul**
Governor Ramsey was the first to respond to Lincoln's 1861 call for troops.
- **Sibley House Historic Site, Mendota Heights**
After the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, Governor Sibley was given command of punitive expeditions against the Dakota.
- **James J. Hill House, St. Paul**
Hill helped organize the First Minnesota Regiment, and after the war hosted a reception for many of its members.
- **Oliver H. Kelley Farm, Elk River**
Farm families were deeply affected by the war and it fundamentally changed the farm economy.
- **W.W. Mayo House, Le Sueur**
In 1864, Dr. William Mayo served as an examining surgeon for the Civil War draft board.
- **Harkin Store, New Ulm**
A glimpse of settler life in the years following the Civil War.
- **Birch Coulee Battlefield, Morton**
Site of one of the hardest fought battles of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.
- **Fort Ridgely, Fairfax**
Training center for soldiers. In August 1862, it was the site of two battles in the U.S.-Dakota War.

Education Classroom Resources:

Check the Minnesota Historical Society's Education website for information about Civil War resources for teachers and students, at www.mnhs.org/education. Offerings include:

- Field Trips: History Center, Minnesota State Capitol and Historic Fort Snelling (available 2013)
- History Player in the Classroom: Charley Goddard, teenage Civil War soldier (available 2013)
- History Live: the Dred Scott Family and the Debate Over Slavery, interactive video conferencing lesson (available 2013)
- History Topic: The First Minnesota (FREE, online)
- Civil War iPad App: A limited-time free download of a fully interactive prototype iPad App for the Civil War chapter of the "Northern Lights" Minnesota history textbook.
- Dred Scott school curriculum kit (available 2014)
- Historic Fort Snelling multimedia classroom (available 2013)

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Civil War Resources

Explore publications, collections and online content at www.mnhs.org/civilwar.

Those interested in learning more about the Civil War and Minnesota's role can explore the Society's vast holdings through a new website at www.mnhs.org/civilwar. The website includes:

Civil War Daybook

Events related to Minnesota and the Civil War are posted each day on the anniversary of when they took place. Posts range from official officers' reports to letters home to newspaper accounts of the war.

Civil War Short Videos

Premiering in January 2013, this 12-part series of short videos will focus on Minnesota's role in the war and how that involvement is remembered. A new video will be released every three months. History Forum lectures and other topical videos will also be posted to this site.

Civil War Podcasts

Learn more about the Civil War from Society curators. Topics include regimental histories, military records, soldier rations and the 28th Virginia Regiment battle flag captured at Gettysburg.

Collections

The Society's collection of Civil War-related items includes more than 600 photographs and 60 works of art; nearly 1,000 objects including weapons, uniforms, drums, flags, personal equipment and more; and an extensive collection of published sources, including out-of-print titles, and notable histories of regiments, battles and personal narratives. In addition, the state archives holds the official records from this period, while original letters and diaries are available in the manuscript collection. Many can be viewed online.

Christie Letters

William, Thomas and Alexander Christie, brothers from southern Minnesota, served in the Civil War. They were prolific letter writers, making observations on war, society and contemporary politics. Many of their letters have been scanned for online reading.

Civil War and Spanish American War Battle Flags

The First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment's national color, sent home after the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861, was the first battle flag to be displayed in a state capitol building. From that date forward it became a tradition to display Minnesota battle flags in the Capitol. In 2008 the Society was awarded a prestigious Save America's Treasures grant to conserve 58 Civil War and Spanish American War battle flags. The flags are now on display four at a time in the Capitol rotunda.

U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 Exhibit and Website

The Minnesota Historical Society is offering many ways to learn about the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, its causes and its aftermath, including an exhibit at the Minnesota History Center on display through Sept. 8, 2013. Visit www.usdakotawar.org for a list of initiatives, events and resources for commemorating and learning about the war.

Minnesota History Magazine

Read articles about the Civil War that were previously published in the Society's magazine, *Minnesota History*.

MNopedia

A free, online encyclopedia with continuously added content on people, events, places and things relating to Minnesota history. Civil War content, including regimental histories, will be added over the next few years.

MHS Press Titles

One Drop in a Sea of Blue: The Liberators of the Ninth Minnesota, by John B. Lundstrom

Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics, by David A. Nichols

Brother of Mine: The Civil War Letters of Thomas & William Christie, edited by Hamp Smith

Go If You Think It Your Duty: A Minnesota Couple's Civil War Letters, edited by Andrea R. Foroughi

Brackett's Battalion: Minnesota Cavalry in the Civil War and Dakota War, by Kurt D. Bergemann

Minnesota in the Civil War: An Illustrated History, by Kenneth Carley

Pale Horse at Plum Run: The First Minnesota at Gettysburg, by Brian Leehan

This Business of War: Recollections of a Civil War Quartermaster, by William G. Le Duc, Foreword by Adam E. Scher

The Last Full Measure: The Life and Death of the First Minnesota Volunteers, by Richard Moe

No More Gallant a Deed: A Civil War Memoir of the First Minnesota Volunteers, by James A. Wright

Henry Hastings Sibley, by Rhoda Gilman

MHS Press is also releasing a new series of short e-books, including a 30 page title on Minnesota and the Civil War excerpted from *Creating Minnesota* by Annette Atkins..

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BACKGROUND

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Minnesotans Played Key Roles in the Civil War

Minnesotans played a number of key roles in the Civil War—the pivotal event in the history of the United States. In 1861, when the war began, the state of Minnesota was only three years old, but the new state became the first to offer troops to the Union cause. Minnesotans went on to see fierce fighting at Bull Run, Gettysburg and many other storied places in the Civil War landscape.

In 1858 when Minnesota was admitted to the Union as a free state, tensions were already high between the North and South over issues of states' rights versus federal authority, westward expansion and slavery.

Despite the Missouri Compromise of 1820 which forbade slavery in the territory that eventually became Minnesota, fur traders and some officers at Fort Snelling owned or rented slaves. Dred and Harriet Scott were enslaved African-Americans owned by Dr. John Emerson, Fort Snelling's surgeon from 1836-40.

In 1840 Dr. Emerson moved to Florida, while his wife Irene took the Scotts with her to St. Louis. In 1846, Dred Scott sued, claiming that because he and his wife had lived as enslaved people in free territory at Fort Snelling and other places, they should be freed. But in 1857 the Supreme Court decided against Dred Scott, effectively declaring most of the provisions of the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional and opening the door for the spread of slavery throughout newly formed U.S. territories.

Abolitionists and anti-slavery advocates were outraged, while Southern slave owners cheered the decision. The election of the anti-slavery Republican Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860 led seven Southern states to secede from the Union to form the Confederate States of America; four more joined them after the first shots of the Civil War were fired in April 1861. Minnesotans voted for Lincoln in both 1860 and 1864.

When the Civil War began on April 12, 1861, Minnesota governor Alexander Ramsey was in Washington, D.C. and he immediately promised President Lincoln that Minnesota would raise a regiment of 1,000 volunteer soldiers for service in the Union army. These men would be formed into the First Minnesota Volunteer Regiment – the first troops offered to fight for the Union during the Civil War.

Minnesota's role at the First Battle of Bull Run, on July 21, 1861, would set an ominous tone for future battles. The First Minnesota suffered more than any other Union regiment: 42 men were killed and another 108 wounded. At Gettysburg in July 1863, hundreds of men from the First Minnesota lost their lives or were wounded. But on the second day of fighting, the First Minnesota helped hold the Union line against advancing Confederate forces which proved crucial to the outcome of the battle. Although the regiment suffered devastating casualties, it played a pivotal role and would eventually be honored with a monument near Cemetery Ridge.

The Second Minnesota Volunteer Regiment of Infantry would also distinguish themselves in battles in the Western Theater at Shiloh, Vicksburg, Chickamauga and Atlanta. In the end, more than 25,000 Minnesotans served in infantry, cavalry, artillery and sharpshooter units.

At the same time, the state was embroiled in another war, this one within its borders. The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 cost the lives of hundreds of people-whites and Dakota alike-and saw the eventual exile of the Dakota from Minnesota.

When it comes to personal accounts of a soldier's life during the Civil War, few can match those told by the Christie brothers of Minnesota-Thomas, William and Alexander-who left a trove of letters to one another and to family members throughout their time served. Between 1861 and 1865, the brothers chronicled their experiences and often commented, in elegant prose, on political and social issues of the times.

The effects of war were also felt by those at home. The loss of loved ones, limited supplies and mounting uncertainty made life difficult for civilians. With a shortage of able-bodied men, women often took up the role of running the family business or farm. Wartime inflation added extra stress. But not everything during the war was negative. Minnesota saw a rise in wheat production and the lumber and banking industries also performed well. When the Homestead Act was implemented in 1862, Minnesota saw a boom in population, as settlers from other states moved west of the Mississippi to claim their free federal land.

By the war's end, more than 2,500 Minnesota soldiers had lost their lives in battle or due to illness, while family and friends were left to mourn. The impact of these men and women on the lives of their loved ones and the country as a whole would never be forgotten.

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Spokespersons for ‘Minnesota and the Civil War’ Exhibit

Dan Spock, Director, Minnesota History Center

Dan Spock oversees exhibits, educational programs, visitor services and facilities management. Under his leadership his team has developed a number of dynamic exhibits including the award-winning “The 1968 Exhibit” which is currently travelling nationally, and most recently, “The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862” and “Then Now Wow,” the largest exhibit the Society has ever created.

Interview subjects:

- The development and elements of the “Minnesota and the Civil War” exhibit.
- Civil War history and Minnesota’s role in the war.

Adam Scher, Senior Curator and Exhibit Collections Representative

Adam Scher curates the Society’s three-dimensional artifact collections, including nearly 1,000 objects associated with the Civil War. Scher formerly served as Vice President of Operations for the American Civil War Center in Richmond, Virginia.

Interview subjects:

- Artifacts from “Minnesota and the Civil War” exhibit.
- Civil War history and Minnesota’s role in the war.

Randal Dietrich, Project Lead, Civil War Sesquicentennial Project

Randal Dietrich leads the state’s four-year commemoration efforts and is responsible for the overall integration of the project components including the cornerstone “Minnesota and the Civil War” exhibit. Dietrich has collaborated with Civil War educators, authors, artists and storytellers statewide and is developing commemorations for the 150th anniversary of Gettysburg (2013) and Appomattox (2015). From 2004 to 2009 Dietrich served as the project manager for the Society’s Minnesota’s Greatest Generation Project.

Interview subjects:

- The significance of the commemoration and an overview of related programs.
- Civil War history and Minnesota’s role in the war.

Hamp Smith, Author of “Brother of Mine: The Civil War Letters of Thomas and William Christie”

A true “Galvanized Yankee,” Hamp Smith was born and raised in the South but moved to the North for school and work. He has held positions with library and archives collections in Wisconsin, Missouri, Ohio and since 1983, at the Minnesota Historical Society. A lifelong interest in the Civil War drew him to the Society’s Civil War collections, particularly the manuscript letters and diaries of Civil War soldiers.

Interview subjects:

- Manuscripts from “Minnesota and the Civil War” exhibit.
- Civil War history and Minnesota’s role in the war.

Wendy Jones, Public and Education Programs

Wendy Jones has more than 20 years experience developing educational programs at the Minnesota History Center. Jones is leading several initiatives to improve the Society’s service to K-12 audiences, including using mobile, digital and video conferencing technology to transform students’ engagement with history and the Civil War. Debuting next year is the Dred Scott History Live! program “Will Nobody Speak for Me?: The Dred Scott Family and The Debate Over Slavery.”

Interview subjects:

- Civil War-related public and educational programs.
- Learning connections for students visiting “Minnesota and the Civil War” exhibit.
- Civil War history and Minnesota’s role in the war.