



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Nicholas Arn

Nicholas was 34 years when he enlisted. He had been born in Berne, Switzerland, came the Minnesota and was farming in Hennepin County, Minnesota, when he joined the Second Battery. He was enlisted by Captain Hotchkiss on January 6, 1862, at Fort Snelling for three years. Nicholas was mustered into service a month later on February 6, 1862. He was 5' 6" tall, had blue eyes, light hair and a light complexion. He was single.

Nicholas was serving with the Battery as it marched from Nashville toward Bowling Green, Kentucky, when he was thrown from his horse. He injured his shoulder and was sent to the hospital at Bowling Green where he remained for ten days. Upon his release from the hospital, Nicholas tried to find his Battery, but it was the day the army was facing the Confederates at Perryville, Kentucky. Nicholas said he attached himself to the first artillery unit he could find to fight in the battle. During the fight, Nicholas was wounded by a shell striking him in the right elbow. The wound sent him back to the hospital, but Nicholas didn't actually get there. He reported that he "was not in the hospital. some friends took care of me until I was discharged."

The discharge for disability came on October 31, 1862. The discharge described his disability as an injury to the arm and elbow joint, part of which was due to a problem before his enlisting, but the wound made it worse. The second reason stated was the fracture of his collar bone with the inner fragment riding over the other. No explanation of the injury is given, but it was the same shoulder Nicholas had injured on the march to Perryville.

Still, Nicholas was not done with the Army. In June of 1863, nearly a year after his discharge from the Battery, Nicholas reenlisted in Company A, Hatch's Battalion of Cavalry in Minnesota. He earned a bounty of \$25 of which he received \$2 at the time on enlistment. He was assigned as the trumpeter. A surgeon's certificate dated November of 1864 noted that the middle finger of Nicholas' hand had been amputated and described the stiffness and "permanent" disability, but Nicholas served his full three years in the cavalry, his discharge dated June 5, 1866.

After his discharge, Nicholas returned to Hennepin County, Minnesota. He took a job working in the store of Rudolph Niggler in Osseo. In October, he married Anna Maria and they set up their home near Osseo. In 1870, Nicholas petitioned the Pension Department for help, using his disability discharge and wound as his grounds for a claim. The Pension Department denied the claim. In 1872 when Nicholas reapplied, two Battery comrades gave depositions that they knew the wound Nicholas had was indeed from the battle at Perryville, Kentucky, even though the commanding officer of the battery Nicholas had attached himself to could not be found. Battery veterans Martin Hosli and Hilarius Schmidt lived near Osseo, so it was easy for Nicholas to get their testimony, but it did not help. The Pension Department still refused the claim.

Nicholas worked for John Heichtman in Osseo in 1874-1875 and made a friend of his employer as Mr. Heichtman came to Anna Maria's aid after Nicholas died on January 18, 1878.

Nicholas was buried in the Niggler Cemetery in Osseo, Hennepin County, Minnesota.

When Nicholas died, he and Anna Maria had almost nothing. They had no property except “a few pieces of house hold furniture, the value of which is not worth mentioning.” Anna Marie took in washing to support herself. She continued to work at various jobs until her health no longer allowed her to make a living. She then received from \$4 to \$6 a month from the Soldier’s Relief fund of the State of Minnesota and charity from neighbors. Her husband’s former employer, Mr. Heichtman, wrote an impassioned letter to the Pension Department on Anna’s behalf, describing her plight. No records tell if the Pension Department ever ruled on the claim. Nothing further is known about her life.



Researched and compiled by the reenactors of the 2nd Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery. Visit our website at <http://www.2mnbattery.org> for more information about our soldiers and our organization.

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