



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Almarin F. Bates

Almarin Franklin Bates was born on June 8, 1836, in Goshen, Massachusetts. He came to Minnesota with his parents and the family was listed on the 1857 census as living in Fillmore County. The family included the elder Bates, Luther and Lucinda, Almarin, and his brother George. Almarin was 21 and George was 18 and they, with their father, were all listed as farmers.

By 1860, Almarin had left his parent's farm and he was considered one of the pioneers of Faribault County when he settled on a farm in Seely Township. On October 7, 1860, Almarin married Jane Ruth Minor. They had a daughter in 1863, but the war was on and Almarin decided to enlist during the draft rendezvous in September of 1864. His name was credited to Harmony, Fillmore County, when he enlisted in the Second Battery on September 3rd. He enlisted for one year and received a bounty of \$100. He had blue eyes, dark hair and complexion. He stood 5' 3" tall.

Almarin served his year with the Battery as a private and it is known he was a member of the Battery's Bible class. Almarin returned to Minnesota and his family when the Battery was mustered out in August of 1865.

Records are confusing at best for Almarin's life after the war. He and Jane had added a son, Ernest, to the family and then comes the confusion.

A newspaper account published at the time of Almarin's death said during the first years in Faribault County, he lived in a "frame shack" which was destroyed by fire during a "terrible blizzard." The newspaper reported that while Almarin went to a neighbor for help. His wife and the children took shelter in a straw barn. Jane froze to death, as did several of the children before Almarin was able to get back with help. Two children survived as they were lying close to the cattle in the barn. Jane's death record confirms the part of the story that she froze to death in March of 1870. However, other sources state Jane and Almarin had only two children. Ernest and a daughter lived to adulthood, so this part of the story contradicts the newspaper account.

The 1885 census shows Almarin remarried to a woman named Flora and they had several children.

The 1895 census lists Almarin and his wife, Mercy, living in Verona, Minnesota. This third marriage is verified by the marriage record stating Almarin and Mercy were married on June 22, 1889.



Almarin and Mercy were living in Wells, Minnesota when he filed for a pension. He received his pension and was a member of the G.A.R. Post. He had a stroke, then a second stroke which ended his life on April 8th, 1909. The cause of death was noted as a cerebral hemorrhage. He was laid to rest in the Rose Hill Cemetery in Wells, Faribault County, Minnesota.

The confusion in Almarin's life is ongoing as indexes show Almarin and Mercy both filing for pensions as recently as 1909 when Mercy filed as his widow. The pension records cannot be found either at the National Archives, the National Personnel Records Center, or the Veteran's Administration.

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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