



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Joseph Bernard

What brought Joseph to enlist is unknown, but certainly something motivated him. He was 52 years old when he joined the Battery on January 4, 1862. The Battery was in the earliest stages of forming and Joseph was one of the first to join it. He was a blacksmith by trade and his skills would have been an asset in the Battery, perhaps leading to his acceptance in the unit even though Joseph was considered over age.

Born in France, Joseph was 5' 6" tall, with a dark complexion, brown eyes, and black hair. He was living in Chatham, Wright County, Minnesota, when he enlisted.

Joseph's career in the Army was short lived. He did go south with the Battery when they went in May of 1862, but by October 26, Joseph received his discharge for disability at Cincinnati, Ohio. He had not been with the Battery for duty for over 60 days because of what was described as "general disability" and it was not expected he would ever be able to return to his unit.

Transportation was furnished for Joseph by the state, though where he went was not recorded. He was probably due some pay as it was noted he had not been paid or issued clothing since entering the hospital on August 5th.

Joseph filed for a disability pension in November of 1862 while he was living in Minneapolis. A doctor certified that Joseph had "considerable derangement of the Liver Stomach and Bowels....It was no doubt induced by exposure in Camp Life. his present Condition disables him from doing any kind of Manual Labor." The doctor went on to write, "...his occupation has been entirely useless to him as a means of gaining a living on account of said disability".

What happened with the pension claim is unclear as Joseph's file contained his original application, his discharge, and a card with the word "abandoned" stamped on it. No records indicate he ever received any money for a disability.

Joseph was married when he joined the army. His wife was Anna Mary Kemper and they were married on July 14, in Mercer County, Ohio. It is unknown when Joseph moved to Minnesota before the war or when he returned to Ohio after the war. The 1880 census lists Joseph living in Marion, Mercer County, Ohio, with Anna, and their son, Louis. Louis was born in 1861 in Ohio. Joseph is noted as a farmer.

It is the last known record for Joseph. Where he went or what happened to him is unknown.

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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