



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

William Blake

Not much is known about William as he seemed disinclined to leave many records about his life behind. In 1860, he was living in Saratoga Township, Winona County, Minnesota, with a doctor named J.C. Dickson and a young woman by the name of Maria Blake, age 17. It is not clear if she was William's daughter or his wife. The home they were living in may have been William's as his real estate value in the census was \$400.

William decided to enlist in the Second Minnesota Battery and went to Fort Snelling in December of 1861. He signed his enlistment papers on January 1, 1862. The Battery was just getting organized and William was one of the early recruits. The descriptive roll said he was born in Grand Isle County, Vermont, was 52 years old, stood 5' 4-3/4" tall, with a light complexion, blue eyes, and light hair. His occupation was farmer. William was recruited by Richard Dawley, a well-known Mexican War veteran from Winona County who was recruiting for the Second Battery. Dawley became a lieutenant in the Battery for his efforts to fill its ranks.

William's age may have worked against him as at 52, he was more than double the age of the average recruit in the Battery. On September 30, 1862, he received a disability discharge. The examining surgeon described the problems as "general debility which was first caused from a severe attack of Typhoid Fever which he had during the month of June, and since that time he has suffered from Chronic Diarrhea which has resisted all treatment."

It is believed William went home to Winona County, but not known. No further trace of his life has been found.

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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