



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Joshua Caldwell

Joshua was a transfer man to the Second Minnesota Battery and served with the unit for only a few months. His name was carried on the roles and is mentioned by Battery members, thus his history is included with theirs.

In August of 1862, Joshua enlisted in Company D, 81st Indiana Volunteer Infantry. He was a farmer, 26 years old, stood 5' 9" tall, with gray eyes, light hair and light complexion. He was married and had children.

The examination Joshua was given prior to enlistment was thorough. He said he was stripped naked and the physical lasted nearly half an hour. Joshua passed and was admitted into the service. By the end of the year, that statement of health was no longer true. He became sick near Nashville where his diarrhea came on suddenly. Joshua blamed it on "the diet, change of water and exposure". He was on camp duty just then, and decided not to go to the doctor or seek treatment as he "did not suppose it would do me any good to go." He said this condition plagued him throughout the service, but he was never excused from duty, put on light duty, or sent to the Invalid Corps. He also tried to keep it a secret from his comrades, not wanting them to know he was ill.

Joshua's ailments were the least of his worries by the end of December. The 81st Indiana was in the thick of the first days' fighting at Stones River near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. After that first days' fight, Joshua describes his whole company as "demoralized and scattered." He said there were "three of them together, lying down asleep near Stone River, Tennessee. William Hughes and Gaines Barrett were with me" when he was captured.

It was January 1st, 1863. The men were sent to Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia, where Joshua remained until about the first of March when he was exchanged. They were sent to Annapolis, Maryland, then to Champ Chase, Ohio, and then south to rejoin their unit in June of 1863. He described his health as being bad during this time and new ailments appeared, "disease of the lungs and throat" in his words. Joshua blamed it on exposure and cold, at times being so bad he could barely talk for the sore throat and coughing. He was not treated for any of these ailments while in prison.

It was about this time that Joshua, with several others, was detailed to serve in the Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery. Men were needed to get the Battery up to fighting strength, so men were detailed from infantry units until new recruits could replace them.

After his detailed time with the Second Battery, Joshua was moved to the pioneer corps and it was from this unit that he received his discharge on June 13th, 1865.

After the war, Joshua went home to Indiana and his family, which added another daughter in 1867. They eventually had six children. Joshua continued to farm near Austin in

Scott County until 1880 when they moved a short distance to a different farm near Scottsburg. Here, Joshua farmed and had a side business of cutting shingles.

Joshua died on April 26, 1906, and was laid to rest in the Scottsburg Cemetery. His wife, Nancy, inherited their house and lot in the town of Scottsburg with a value of about \$500. It had no notes or mortgages against it. He also left her a cow worth \$20 and some household goods valued at about \$25. He had no stocks, bonds or insurance.



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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