



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Joel T. Davis

"I, Joel T. Davis do solemnly swear, (or affirm) that I have never voluntarily borne arms against the United States since I have been a citizen thereof; that I have given no aid, countenance, counsel, or encouragement to persons engaged in armed hostility thereto."

This Oath of Allegiance was signed by Joel Davis on November 14, 1864, upon his promotion to the rank of Second Lieutenant of the Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery. The Battery was at Chattanooga, Tennessee, doing various duties including garrison duty, guard and picket duty, and riding out on scouting missions. It was a time to also reorganize, promote, discharge, and recruit in the Battery.

Joel enlisted as a private on November 21, 1861. Joel's enlistment is very early. He enlisted on the day the First Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery was accepted into the service of the United States. This may explain why his promotion to sergeant in the Second Battery came equally early. The Second Battery was not accepted into United States service until March 21, 1862, but by that time, Joel had been in long enough and proven himself valuable enough that he was given the rank of sergeant.

His hometown was Anoka, Minnesota, where he was a farmer. He had been born in Lewiston, Maine, on July 29, 1831. By 1861, he stood 5' 7-1/2" tall, with hazel eyes, brown hair, and a dark complexion. He was single, a status that did not change during his entire life.

Joel was the sergeant in charge of a gun at the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19th, 1863. The Battery was ordered into the fight at the "double quick" under enemy fire. The captain of the Battery, William Hotchkiss described what happened next. "A ball from the enemy's skirmish line of sharpshooter hit the horse upon which said Joel T. Davis was riding causing it to stumble or fall throwing him forward onto the front of his saddle with such force as to cause an injury to his groin which terminated in a rupture; that notwithstanding said injury Davis remained on duty with his gun during the battle." Joel was treated after the battle by the Battery's hospital steward, Albert Gowdy. It was an unofficial position and it is not known how much or little medical training Gowdy may have had. The injury did cause Joel problems as several members of the Battery noted that after being hurt, Joel did not do any more mounted or foot drill and it was said he could not ride at a trot without a great deal of pain.

Despite the injury, Joel reenlisted for another three years or the duration of the war while the Battery was stationed at Rossville, Georgia. He was paid \$35 bounty.



When the war ended, Joel stayed in Minnesota for a few years. In 1871, he moved to Newton, Kansas, where he took a claim three miles from the town. In town, Joel entered into a partnership with another man and they started a bakery. Joel built the building to house their bakery and it was one of the first buildings on Main Street in Newton. The business did well and few men “did more to advance the interests of this section” than Joel Davis according to the newspaper. He was a member of the Newton Masonic Lodge and received his degrees there. At his death, the newspaper stated, “He was a man of the strictest integrity, very quiet and unobtrusive in his manner, but respected and esteemed by all who knew him.”

Joel died on January 16, 1899 and was laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery in Newton.

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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