



## 2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

### John Green

John Green was a veteran of the Second Battery, but he never left Fort Snelling. He enlisted on August 29, 1864, in St. Paul, agreeing to serve for one year. He mustered in the next day at Fort Snelling, one of many who were part of the 1864 Draft Rendezvous. The muster role listed him as being 5' 5 1/2" tall, with gray eyes, light hair and complexion. He said his home town was Dayton, Minnesota, where he worked as a cooper. It is unknown when John arrived in Minnesota, he was born in Montpelier, Vermont, and was 34 years old when he enlisted. His name was credited to Shieldsville, Rice County, Minnesota.

John was probably not one of those who enlisted only for the bounty and deserted soon after. There is no record of him receiving any bounty money, though most who enlisted during this draft were paid bounties. His discharge for disability came on December 10, 1864. He served not quite four months. The discharge states, *"Incipient Phthisis (handwriting is questionable). disease existed prior to enlistment. Could not have escaped the notice of examining Surgeon. Is unfit for veteran reserve corps. General feebleness of Constitution unfitting him for any active duty."*

John's muster sheet for the Battery had a notation added to it that stated John "had not been taken up on the rolls of the Battery."

Because he had served, even though it was only at Fort Snelling, John was eligible for a pension. In his pension application, he described his illness. *"In 1864 while stationed at Ft. Snelling Erysipelas developed under left arm afterwards to similar location on right side remaining there for 3yrs partially disabling me. Then attacked scalp where has since remained causing intense itching and pain with swelling. Four years later, attacked right hand and scrotum simultaneously. Still present in scrotum and right hand partially crippled by loss of bone of first finger and stiffening of other fingers. Sharp pain over left lung when take cold or taking breath. Constant numbness left leg and arm and occasionally severe pain (on getting wet). Catarrh. Troublesome (?) crust forming Much gas on stomach after eating."*

That was John's "short" version of his health problems. Another entire page was filled with details of his health failings. It comes as no surprise that John's pension application was granted. At the time, May 27, 189?, John was living in Post Falls, Idaho.

Census information provides some clues about John's life after his discharge. The 1875 census showed him living with his family in Burns Township, Anoka County, Minnesota. A notation in John's records indicates he married Josephine in Burns, so perhaps they were living near her family. John listed his children in that same record, but his memory was probably a little fuzzy about the years his children were born. John said they had their first son in 1865. Subsequent children were born in 1875, 1880, 1885, 1887, and 1890, though he

listed two children as being born in 1880 for a total of seven children. Six children appear on the 1880 census, born in 1863, 1866, 1869, 1871, 1874 and 1880.

That 1880 census said John was a farmer—Burns was a very rural area at the time and there would have been few other occupations available.

John and Josephine moved to Idaho sometime after 1880 and were in Washington by the 1890s when John's pension papers were filed.

Josephine died in 1904 and their son, Charles, bought a section of grave plots in Crown Hill Cemetery in Seattle, Washington. Two sons and one daughter are buried in the same cemetery with the graves for John and Josephine.

John was not wealthy when he died, the only "property" listed on the form asking for the government to pay for John's last expenses was "ordinary wearing apparel." A grandson was the one to make the request and he stated that the cause of John's death was a "cold on lungs and old age." John was only ill and hospitalized a few days before his death came on September 5, 1917. John's final bills included his hospital and doctor's bills and the expenses of burying him, a total of \$116.50.

John was laid to rest beside Josephine in the Crown Hill Cemetery, but no grave marker was ever placed for John. A page of notes in the cemetery office said a granddaughter had called the cemetery in 1979 and asked about the graves. She told the cemetery caretakers that she remembered coming to visit the graves, clean them up, and that her grandmother told her the graves (Josephine and John) were not marked because they "could not afford to buy markers back then."

In 2003, members of the Second Minnesota reenacting Battery visited John's grave and found it still unmarked. Efforts to contact any remaining family failed and the cemetery administration agreed to allow a veteran's marker to be installed on John's grave in 2012.



*Researched and compiled by the reenactors of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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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