



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

David Jarvis, Jr.

In pursuance on Military Notice, I respectfully present Myself as an applicant for Examination before the Examining board, to obtain a Commission as 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Heavy Artillery Colored Troops.

I am twenty-four years of age, was born in the town of Earls-Ferry, Fife Shire, Scotland, by occupation a carpenter, perminant resident St. Cloud, Stearns County, State of Minnesota. present Post Office address, Army Gun-boat Silver Lake, No. 2, box 365, Nashville Tenn,

I was Mustered into the U.S. Volunteer service by Capt A.D. Nelson, U.S.A, on the 21st day of March 1862, at Fort Snelling, State of Minnesota. Present at the siege of Corinth, Miss, in May 1862. In company with the Army under Gen. Buell, In the Campaign of 1862, was engaged in the Battle of Perryville, KY.-- ordered to Hospital at Nashville by means of sickness on the 12th day of Dec. 1862.--Detailed on board Army Gun-boat Silver Lake No. 2 on the 2nd day of April 1863 where I have remained until the present.

Respectfully & Obt. Servant

Private David Jarvis

2nd Battery Minnesota Vols.

Detailed on Gun-boat Silver Lake No. 2

David's letter provided his background as he hoped to receive a commission as an officer with the Heavy Artillery. A letter written by an officer on the gunboat noted that David acted "in the capacity of gunner for a year aboard the Gun-boat Silver Lake No. 2 and for his efficiency and skill in his duties has always elicited the warmest praise of his superior officers and is in my opinion eminently well qualified to fill any position as line officer in Heavy Artillery."

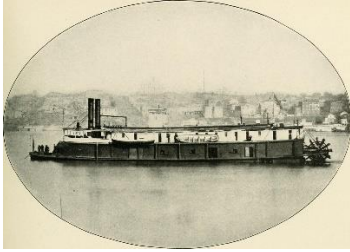
A comrade and commanding officer in the Second Minnesota wrote that "his moral standing is good and that he had acted with the Battery on the field of battle in such a manner as to meet the approval and praise of his Officers. I do cheerfully recommend him for Subordination to discipline and efficiency as a soldier".

What happened is unknown, but David did not receive his commission. Instead, he went back to and remained with the Second Minnesota Battery until he was mustered out three months later. The descriptive roll of the Battery said he was 5' 3" tall, with light hair, blue eyes, and a light complexion.

Very few Minnesota men served in the Navy during the Civil War, so David's detail to a gunboat for over a year puts him in a select class. The *Silver Lake* was a wooden sternwheeler built in 1862 in Pennsylvania and put into service on Christmas Eve. She served as a member of the squadron of gunboats on the Cumberland River tasked with preventing Confederate supplies from crossing.

A serious outbreak of small pox on the *Silver Lake* began in February of 1863. The sick men were taken to Paducah, Kentucky, but the ship did not cease operations. In company with two other gunboats, the *Silver Lake* shelled Confederate troops at Florence, Tennessee, and forced them to abandon the town. By April, the gun platforms needed work and the ship needed new crew members. David was detailed to the *Silver Lake* on April 2, 1863. How he was chosen for the duty is unknown, but it does make sense to bring an artillery man on board a ship equipped with cannons. David would have been quite familiar with Parrott rifles and howitzers since those were guns used in the Second Minnesota. The

Silver Lake had those same guns, but somewhat larger in scale. The *Silver Lake's* Parrots were 20 pounders and the howitzers were 24 pounders.



Silver Lake Gunboat

On April 3, the day after David was assigned to the gunboat, the *Silver Lake* destroyed the small town of Palmyra in retaliation for attacks on gunboats by guerrilla forces. Other action David saw while on the *Silver Lake* included a battle with Confederate batteries near Bells Mills, Tennessee, in December. Not long after, the *Silver Lake* helped recaptured three transports taken earlier by Southern troops.

David stayed on the gunboat until January 13, 1865. This was the time when the Battery members were making a choice about reenlisting as many of them were at or near their three years. David chose not to reenlist and was mustered out at the end of his term of service on March 28, 1865.

It is possible David did not return to Minnesota as in 1865, he noted that he was living in the City of Brooklyn, New York, where he stayed until 1898.

The next year, David was living in Clayton, New York. He married a widow, Mary Lapentigny, on October 29, 1899, in New Jersey. David and Mary went back to Clayton where they lived for about five years before they moved to Watertown, New York. They stayed there for another five years before moving back to Clayton.

David was receiving a pension in 1906. His disability was poor health, a pair of ruptures and almost total deafness. David blamed the army for his disabilities.

A letter appears in David's pension file dated June 13, 1912. It was written by his stepdaughter, Miss A.A. Slawson. She was pleading with the Pension Department to give her David's address. No further information on why, how, or if this occurred.

David died on June 9, 1915. His death certificate noted that he had been born on October 29, 1839, and was a contractor by trade. The informant on the certificate was not his wife, Mary, though David was listed as married rather than widowed and Mary filed for a widow's pension after David's death.

David was buried in the Clayton Cemetery in New York.



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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