



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Richard Montgomery Johnson

Despite the fact of his birth on the Fourth of July in the state of Virginia, Richard's patriotism ran toward the Union. He was mustered into the Second Battery on September 4, 1864, at Rochester, Minnesota. He was 33 years old, had black eyes, dark hair, a dark complexion, and stood 5' 8-3/4" tall. He was given \$33.33 of his promised \$100 bounty for his one year enlistment.

Richard's enlistment was credited to Elba, Winona County, for the draft and it is believed he was living in Winona County in 1864. Many of these men went to Rochester to enlist, Richard being one of them.

It was just over a month after enlisting that Richard was left sick at the hospital at Louisville, Kentucky, on October 14, 1864. He wrote a letter describing the treatment and his opinion of it.

"Sir, you wanted to no how i Was treated when I in Field Hospital Will you Please Tell me Where that Hospital is I was in a hospital when on the road to Chatanooga but where i cant Tell you for i was so sick i did not now where nor made no inquire all i wanted was to die i was treated like a dog more then a Soldier The Doctor came to the Foot of where i laide and said what are you doing here who are you and Where are you from and where are you going and i toled him he walked out in The morning he came round again he loocked at me as he past by said Nothing i was there 2 days i was rundown With canit Dirarier that i could not walk a lone so one of my comrads came back for me and i went with him 2 cups of coffee and 2 small pices of Braid was all i had in that time yours

Richard m Johnson"

Richard's writing skills were somewhat lacking as the letter is typed as close as possible to what he wrote.

He stayed with the Battery and was a member of the Battery's Bible Class. In June of 1865, the Second Minnesota was celebrating the end of the war and was firing off their guns. Richard was serving on the front of the gun and somehow claimed an injury. He lost the hearing in his right ear and the concussion of the gun caused a "jarring pain" in his left side. Richard later filed for a disability pension because of these injuries.

The Battery was mustered out of the service at Fort Snelling in August of 1865. Richard went back to his wife and in 1867, they moved to Iowa where they settled near the town of Tabor in Fremont County. Richard's wife was Susanah Sigler and they had been married on March 20, 1857, in Ohio.

Richard was a farmer. He and Susanah raised six children before her death on November 8, 1893.

Richard received a pension for his military service and in 1909 when he was applying for admission to the Iowa State Soldiers' Home, the amount was \$20 a month. He was admitted to the home on July 20, 1909.

Richard may have been a bit forgetful by this time as he asked his daughter to send his pension papers to him. He must have thought he had forgotten them.

His daughter wrote him a letter on the 21st telling Richard where he could find his papers. *"you will find your Pension papers that you send away ever 3 months pined to the pocket of your good coat in side pocket hope you will find them all right hope you will get well rite soon and let me hear once a wek. goodby from your daughter Mrs Lissie German"*

Perhaps the lack of punctuation was hereditary.



Whether Richard found the papers in his pocket is unknown as he died just five days after entering the Home.

Arrangements were made to take his body back to Tabor to be buried with "old soldier comrades" as his pall bearers.

After all his final expenses were paid--and a conflict about the cost of the tombstone and who should pay for it resolved--Richard left an inheritance of about \$7 to each of his children.

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.

Updated: 18 June 2013