



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

James M. Lane

James was one of the older men to enlist in the Second Minnesota Battery when he volunteered to serve with them on January 11, 1862. He was 40 years old. The Battery was just forming up and the patriotic fever was still running strong. James left his wife and home in Anoka to go to Fort Snelling to enlist. Anoka had been his home since 1853 when he and a man named John Cundy arrived there. It was a new town and full of prospects for a man who was a house builder. James had been born in Boston, Massachusetts, and had come to the new territory of Minnesota like so many others looking for a new start or new opportunities.

In his new home, James worked to get the First Baptist Church organized in Anoka. He was one of the first seven constituent members of the congregation. In the seven years between his arrival in Anoka and his enlistment, James had seen the community grow and the area become a state. He may have known the man who recruited him for the Battery as William Hotchkiss was often noted as coming to Anoka. Hotchkiss was forming an artillery battery and James agreed to become a part of it.

The muster sheet said James had blue eyes, brown hair, light complexion and stood 5' 6-1/2" tall. He was married and his wife's name was Margaret.

James served in the Battery without special note until February 6, 1863. That was when he was sent out on a scouting and foraging mission with six men from the Battery. All six were captured and held prisoner by the Confederates. It was near Franklin, Tennessee, that the men were caught, and they were soon on their way further south. James left no stories about his captivity, but another of those captured, Francis Flint did. He said they were held within earshot of the Rebels who were discussing whether to shoot the prisoners there or continue to hold them. Discussions decided in the prisoners' favor and they were sent to Columbia, Tennessee, then on to Tullahoma, and finally they arrived at Libby Prison in Richmond where they were held until they were paroled and exchanged. The men captured were far worse for the wear and the health of most of them was broken by the time they returned to the Battery on June 9, 1863. James was in the field hospital by the 24th. He was then transferred to the General hospital at Louisville, Kentucky, during the first week of August where he was treated for "anemia and valvular disease of the heart" according to hospital records. His treatments included whiskey and quinine as prescriptions for the sun stroke James had suffered the previous summer. On August 23, the records indicate he was "blistered 2 by 3 on back of neck" as a treatment for his illness. It is presumed that this means a pack of caustic material was applied to the back of his neck until it blistered the skin in a patch of 2 inches by 3 inches as a medical treatment.

It did not appear to have helped as James was discharged for disability on August 27th, 1863. The doctor in charge noted that James was not physically fit enough for the invalid corps, so he was to be sent home.

James returned to Margaret and their next known home was on Chestnut Avenue in Minneapolis where James again said he was building houses. In February of 1880, James applied for a disability pension. He blamed his poor health on the sunstroke he'd suffered in the summer of 1862 while the Battery was on the march from Clear Creek to Holly Springs. He believed that the heat, fatigue and exposure was what caused him problems and he even attributed the heart troubles he had to it. He told the Pension department that he had been treated for about six weeks by the army before being discharged.

James got his pension and continued to receive the \$8.00 a month the government paid him until the time of his death on August 7, 1880. He was laid to rest in Lakewood Cemetery with other family members, but it is unknown why James rested in an unmarked grave.

The Second Minnesota Battery arranged to have a marker set for James with the help of Lakeside Cemetery. It was dedicated in the summer of 2006.



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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