



## 2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

### Charles Martin

Of all the men who served in the Second Battery, Charles leaves one the most tangled tales. Martin was a common surname in Minnesota in the 1860s, and Charles a popular first name. Sorting one from another should not be difficult when a middle initial is included, but in this case, multiple initials are found. The Adjutant General's records for Minnesota show three men by the name of Charles Martin, varying middle initials, served during the Civil War. Determining one from another has proven quite problematic.

The Charles Martin who presented himself for enlistment in the Second Minnesota Battery on April 12, 1864, said he was 31 years old, born in Spain, and was a laborer. The descriptive rolls showed him as 5' 9" tall, with hazel eyes, brown hair and a light complexion. He did not sign his name to the enlistment forms, he made his mark as was witnessed by Caption Hotchkiss and the examining surgeon. The papers list Wanamingo, Goodhue County, Minnesota as where Charles said was his home. It seems a bit unusual since Charles was in Chattanooga, Tennessee, when he enlisted with the Battery. Why was he in Tennessee enlisting?

The information is backed up by the official muster roll of the Battery, it stating that Charles enlisted in Tennessee, though it also says was officially mustered into the Battery in St. Paul, Minnesota. This may be a matter of record keeping as it is unlikely Charles enlisted in Tennessee, went to Minnesota to be mustered in, and then back to Tennessee to serve. If this was the case, perhaps the next record on Charles makes more sense as the list of deserters included his name on May 4, 1864, as having deserted in Chicago, Illinois. If he was really shuffled back and forth across country as the records seem to imply, Charles may have gotten tired of it and just gave up on the army while passing through Chicago. He would have had a little cash in his pocket as the papers indicate he was paid \$25 bounty money with a promise of \$75 more.

To add to the confusion, a company muster roll from Company H, 85th Indiana Infantry contains a Charles Martin in September and October of 1864, with the remark that he had been transferred from the Second Minnesota Battery by order of Jeff C. Davis to serve on temporary duty. The final entry on this record stated that he was "dropped from these rolls" with a further notation that he was "not on muster out rolls" of the 85th Indiana.

Neither did he appear on the muster out rolls of the Second Battery. His name remained on the deserter list.

Exactly what his story might be will probably never be known.

*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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