



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Ira Munson

Ira was farming in Winona County, Minnesota, when he decided to enlist in the Second Battery. He was mustered in on February 10, 1862, at Fort Snelling. The descriptive roll listed him as single, with blue eyes, light hair, a light complexion, and 5' 6-1/2" tall. His birth was on August 9, 1834, in Wayne County, New York. It is not known when Ira came to Minnesota as the 1850 census showed him as the eldest child on Jere and Charlotte Munson living on a farm in Lafayette County, Wisconsin.

John Gibson was Ira's neighbor before the war, Battery comrade, and friend after the war. John noted that it was after the battle at Stones River, Tennessee, on December 31, 1862, that Ira began suffering with piles. John said the piles were "very bad and the officers wanted him to go to the hospital but he refused to do so." Ira must have believed it was better to stay in camp and let the Battery's hospital steward care for him. Since the Battery did not have their own surgeon, care was provided by the men for each other or, when in camp, the surgeons of the brigade often assisted with sick call in the Battery. These were the doctors Ira relied on.

His health troubles aside, Army life proved to be something Ira was good at and he was promoted to corporal on November 3, 1863. He might have been good at it, but Ira decided he'd had enough of the Army a few months later when it came time to reenlist. Ira chose not to continue in Uncle Sam's Army and was sent on detached service to Battery I, Second Illinois Artillery while the Minnesota Battery went home on veteran's furlough. His friend, John Gibson, went with Ira to the Illinois Battery as he chose not to reenlist, either. This put John in a position to testify to the Pension Department where Ira's hearing had been damaged. John said he knew Ira had lost most of the hearing in one ear and partial loss in the other during the battle at the Chattahoochie River in Georgia in July of 1864. John said, "We had a very hard battle at this place." John blamed the intense firing of the cannons for Ira's hearing loss.

With the Illinois Battery, the Minnesota boys saw some hard fighting under General William Sherman's drive to Atlanta. They were sent back to the Minnesota Battery in October and Ira was mustered out the following March at Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Ira went to Wisconsin at some point after the war, probably to his parents, and was in Green County, Wisconsin, on January 23, 1868, when he married Caroline Loveless. They were farming in Winona County until 1871 when they moved to Plymouth County, Iowa.

Ira and Caroline were farming in Iowa in 1880 when the census showed them having had a son, years old, named Homer.

Records to tell of Ira's life after 1880 are sparse. Ira was a member of the local GAR Post and they kept a record of his service and eventually, his grave. Ira's marriage to Caroline ended in divorce on October 10, 1892. The 1895 census paints a confusing picture. Ira is the head of the household and a farmer, age 60, divorced, and entitled to vote in the general election. Also in the household is Liddy Brink, a female aged 44 and occupation housewife. Next is George Brink, male, age 31, occupation farmer; and Lucy Munson, female, age 21, occupation housekeeper.



Ira married a second time on November 29, 1899, to Martha Kynock. They told the 1900 census taker they had been married "7/12" of a year. He said he was a landlord and owned his house, but it had a mortgage on it.

Ira died on March 20, 1908, and was laid to rest in the LeMars Memorial Cemetery in LeMars, Plymouth County, Iowa.

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: 30 March 2022