



## 2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

### John Freman Spencer

John was born on September 7, 1839, in Crawford County, Maine. When he came to Minnesota is unknown, but he was in Anoka when he enlisted on May 6, 1864. This was the same time as the Second Battery veterans were home on veterans furlough and some men were from Anoka. John may have decided to join the Battery after talking with them. His enlistment was taken by Captain Hotchkiss while Hotchkiss was in Anoka.

John allowed his name to be credited to Vermillion in Dakota County and he agreed to serve for three years or until the end of the war. It does not appear that he received any bounty money, something that was unusual in Minnesota in 1864 as most men did receive a bounty at that time. The descriptive roll said John was 5' 9" tall, had hazel eyes, brown hair and a light complexion. He was a laborer and single.

When the furlough was over, the Second Battery returned south and John went with them as a new recruit. He never saw much hard fighting as most of the last year the Battery spent during the war was on garrison duty. While there was little to cause harm in the way of Rebel bullets, accidents were entirely another matter. In June of 1864, John was put in charge of a corral of horses. He said the horses "stampeded." John tried to head them off as he was on a horse. He went under a low tree without noticing it until the tree struck him from the horse. The fall injured his left knee and it didn't heal properly, but John was never sent to the hospital for the injury.

John was mustered out with the Battery in August of 1865 and he went back to working as a civilian.

On September 26, 1868, a justice of the peace married John Spencer and Margaret Dygert at Albion in Wright County, Minnesota. The couple had ten children between 1869 and 1895, though John told the Pension Department they had been separated at some time in their married life. He also noted that his dates might not be accurate as they had lost their house in a wind storm and all the contents with it. When they moved to Swanville in Morrison County, Minnesota, is not known, but John had a successful farming operation there that he eventually turned over to one of his sons. He and Margaret continued to live on the farm until John died on October 23, 1915. John was laid to rest with a veteran's marker in the Springbrook Cemetery in Swanville.



*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.*

Updated: 31 July 2020