

Corporal Lyman B Snow
111 Years without a Military Headstone – Until Now
Oakwood Cemetery Traverse City
Veteran of Two Wars
Veteran US Mexican War 1846-1848
Veteran American Civil War 1861-1865

As the years pass turning into decades, then centuries, our memories are often forgotten. Time catches up to us absorbing our memories, families forget us after we had to leave.

We then turn grey and our future generations are often not included in the importance of history, or those who contributed.

Born in Stafford, Orange County Vermont on October 12th 1825. Within 15 short years he had moved to Allegheny New York, then Port Huron Michigan. Working as a “tanner,” before the break out of the war with Mexico.

On October 7th 1857 he enlisted with the War with Mexico under the First Regiment Michigan Volunteers. He was to serve under Captain Buell also from Port Huron. Buell and Snow’s brother left for Cordova Mexico and he waited word. However, that information was never provided. Lyman Snow did not know that both had contracted yellow fever and died. In fact, many of the US Service men died daily. Bodies were stacked 10 feet high at the hospital in Cordova.

Lyman Snow eventually made it to Cordova where he worked at the local hospital for veterans. One of his daily chores was to carry the bodies of the dead to the assigned burial grounds. He had no fear of the contagious diseases and never contracted the fever.

Snow went with General Scott to St. Louis Potosa near Mexico City. Most of the fighting was contained in the nearby mountains by units involved in guerilla warfare. He soon mustered out but was not paid until he returned to Port Huron. A private’s pay was \$7 a month and he nearly starved, as did many men due to lack of supplies. He recalls his first good meal in a long time once the troops landed in Chicago. Here, they were fed by citizens as well as the military.

He recalls the nearly starving men and one man sold an army blanket in order to buy food. Colonel Stockton took drastic measures and punished the soldier by putting him on a California Horse.

Basically, a saw horse, with an 80 pound bag of sand on his lap. Both hands tied behind the soldier's back. His mouth tied with a rag around his mouth as punishment. Colonel was described as a coward and tyrant. He died and the troops were happy to see him go.

In the Village of Port Huron a California Horse was erected by the Veterans of the Mexican war in the city center. On top was an effigy of Colonel Stockton, bound and gagged.

He went into business in Macomb County and did very well until his business was destroyed by fire. He went to New York and Red Wing Minnesota going into business again and meeting his wife Laura who died September 6th 1904.

In 1861 duty called again and Snow enlisted in the 7th Minnesota Infantry, Company A as a Corporal Under Captain Cutler they were sent to the frontier to address the "Indian Problem."

The rise of the rebellion and Johnny Reb from the Confederate States of America was a much greater threat than the peaceful plains people. That being noted, he was absorbed in the 16th Army Corps.

The Federals then marched 10,625 miles on foot through Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida. This entire time they engaged the CSA in fierce battles. In Tupelo, the Confederates captured Union Captain Sturgis, 200 wagons of supplies and 1800 mules.

The 16th Army Corps was sent to engage the rebels, marching for 10 days and saved the Union men from POW Camps.

Corporal Lyman B Snow mustered out in Ft. Snelling Minnesota in the fall of 1865. He would do business in Northport, and Horton Bay in Charlevoix County where he retired. On July 14th 1913, at 88 years of age, Cpl. Lyman B. Snow passed away at his home in Charlevoix County. Pursuant to his wishes, The McPherson Post 18 in Grand Traverse County took charge of his funeral services.

Here he would lay in an unmarked grave next to his wife Laura Snow for 111 years. The name Laura appears on the family obelisk. However, Lyman's name was never engraved into the memorial.

The only indication of his existence would be the Grand Army Republic flag holder with his name inscribed on the back. Nothing more, nothing less.

This information was shared with the Graves Registration Officer at the local Civil War group but the call to duty was never answered. Finally after 111 years of waiting, it was determined that this patriot had waited long enough and I was asked to order a stone was ordered from the VA.

As of today, the long awaited military headstone has been delivered and placed in Oakwood Cemetery. He can be found in the 1st Addition, Block 328, Lot 04. He can also be found on Find A Grave.Com.

This headstone officially marks the end to the 2024 season. 2025 will mark my 10th year as an official volunteer in Oakwood Cemetery. I'm looking forward to the chores and work to be finished.

Corporal Lyman B Snow is the 3000 headstone to be marked as job complete.

Everyone deserves to be remembered.
Scott Schwander, Oakwood Cemetery Volunteer