



SLOUCH HAT – CAPTAIN RUFUS W. SMITH

Cavalry Officer's slouch hat identified to Capt. Rufus W. Smith, a member of the California Battalion who joined the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry during the Civil War. The 2nd Mass. was active in pursuit of John Mosby throughout the hills of Virginia and eventually saw much action in the Eastern Theatre.

This slouch hat is in fine condition with minor mothing on crown. The felt is thick and supple with wide red Russian leather interior band, brittle but original to the hat. Black cotton cockade fastener to ostrich plume with woven acorns on hat chord. Cavalry insignia sewn on front with silver "2" for 2nd Mass.

Identified with period ink on inside of band, to Capt. R.W.Smith, being Rufus W. Smith whose military records accompany the hat. Captain Smith was killed in action, leading his cavalry company on a charge at Cedar Creek, Va. in 1864 at the approximate age of 30. Originally from Maine, Smith was a member of the California Light Guard when in San Francisco, and resigned to join Captain Eigenbrodt's Company E of the California Battalion. After the death of J. Sewall Reed, founding officer and captain of the storied Cal 100, Captain Smith was appointed to succeed Reed.