

In 1878, there were four military companies that came to a new camp near Bear Butte Creek in Dakota Territory, Camp Ruhlen, to construct what was to become Fort Meade.<sup>1</sup> Included in this group were Companies F and K, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry; and Companies E and M, Seventh Cavalry. This equaled sixty-five enlisted cavalrymen and forty-seven enlisted infantrymen present in this new camp, along with their eight officers.<sup>2</sup> One of these enlisted infantrymen was an Irish immigrant, James Plunkett, who served in the U.S. Army from 1860-1880.<sup>3</sup> During this time, Plunkett fought for the Union in the Civil War. He married Elizabeth Torrence Baldwin and had a son, William, who was born while Plunkett was stationed in Michigan.<sup>4</sup> After James left the military in 1880, he and Elizabeth homesteaded in the Sturgis area until his death<sup>5</sup> on October 1, 1891, when he died from dropsy.<sup>6</sup> He was buried at the Fort Meade Cemetery, and because he was a Civil War Veteran, his headstone was provided by Gross Brothers, Lee, of Massachusetts.<sup>7</sup>



James Plunkett's wife,  
Elizabeth



James Plunkett and his son,  
William

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert Lee, *Fort Meade and the Black Hills*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), pg. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Lee, pg. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Roberta Sago and Lee Stroschine, *Fort Meade: Peacekeeper of the Black Hills*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2018), pg. 57.

[https://books.google.com/books?id=jZJRDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA57&lpg=PA57&dq=james+plunkett+fort+meade&source=bl&ots=kmaqyclBBV&sig=aq\\_c0xaItxWqnYt9ER26iVMNzCc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjQl-](https://books.google.com/books?id=jZJRDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA57&lpg=PA57&dq=james+plunkett+fort+meade&source=bl&ots=kmaqyclBBV&sig=aq_c0xaItxWqnYt9ER26iVMNzCc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjQl-)

<sup>4</sup> *Old Post Cemetery: Fort Meade, South Dakota*. Fort Meade, SD: Old Fort Meade Museum and Historic Research Association, 1989, pg. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Roberta Sago and Lee Stroschine, *Fort Meade: Peacekeeper of the Black Hills*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2018), pg. 57.

[https://books.google.com/books?id=jZJRDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA57&lpg=PA57&dq=james+plunkett+fort+meade&source=bl&ots=kmaqyclBBV&sig=aq\\_c0xaItxWqnYt9ER26iVMNzCc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjQl-](https://books.google.com/books?id=jZJRDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA57&lpg=PA57&dq=james+plunkett+fort+meade&source=bl&ots=kmaqyclBBV&sig=aq_c0xaItxWqnYt9ER26iVMNzCc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjQl-)

<sup>6</sup> *Old Post Cemetery: Fort Meade, South Dakota*. Fort Meade, SD: Old Fort Meade Museum and Historic Research Association, 1989, pg. 14.

<sup>7</sup> "Card Records of Headstones Provided for Civil War Veterans, 1879-1903," Genealogy Trails, updated 2018, [http://genealogytrails.com/cwstones/p/p\\_pinkham\\_pochert.html](http://genealogytrails.com/cwstones/p/p_pinkham_pochert.html).