



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Fordis Averill

Fordis Averill was a 23 year old farm laborer from Grow Township in Anoka County when he enlisted in the Second Battery on February 24, 1862. He served as a private throughout his time in the Battery. He was 5' 6-1/2" tall, had blue eyes, light hair and light complexion. He had been born in Brawford, Canada West on February 22, 1844.

Fordis had his share of mishaps while in the Army. His first injury came at Benton Barracks, Missouri, when he was kicked by a horse and struck in the left breast. He said, "the kick greatly injured me at the time" and even in later years, Fordis still complained of the injury. He listed it on his application for disability pension.

Though not an injury, Fordis' luck did not improve when he was captured with five other Battery men near Franklin, Tennessee, on February 6, 1863. The group was taken to Richmond and exchanged at City Point, Virginia on March 7th. Fordis reported in at Camp Parole, Maryland, on March 8, and went back to the Battery on June 9th. Fordis and one other man were the only ones of the six men captured who were healthy enough to ever return to duty with the Battery.

The Battle of Chickamauga on September 19-20, 1863, saw the Battery in heavy action. Fordis was slightly wounded while he was "at work loading one of the guns of the battery". Reports show he was hit in the left hip by a "rifle ball". He recovered and reported back to duty on Christmas Day, 1863. Fordis re-enlisted with the Battery in March of 1864 and received a \$35 bounty.

After the war, Fordis remained in Minnesota. In 1879, he applied for and received a pension of \$6.00 per month for "gun shot wound in left hip". He was living in Little Falls, Morrison County, in 1883. His name appears as the landowner of a parcel of land in Pike Creek, next to the rail road in section 13 in 1892. Comments on the 1890 census indicate that he "refused to talk" when asked about his military service.

Fordis married Ellen McClure on July 7, 1866 and they had four children. Fordis was a member of the Workman Post of the G.A.R., the Little Falls Council of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, and the Knights of Pythias.



His death came after several months of illness. The official cause of death was noted as Bright's Disease, but his obituary detailed a long series of lung and kidney problems that had been made worse by his lumbering in the woods the previous winter. While Fordis had seemed to recover from that illness, he had taken another cold while attending a political caucus in October and he did not recover from it. He was 54 years and 9 months old at his death on December 8, 1898.

He was laid to rest with a Soldier's stone and a family stone in the Oakland Cemetery in Little Falls, plot number #217. His name is spelled "Fordis" on the family stone, but "Fordice" on his military stone.

Ellen inherited a pair of ponies, five cows valued at \$25 each, and some household goods when Fordis died.

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.

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