



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

John Charles Beede

Sometimes he went by Charles, other times by John, and later in life, it appeared he went simply by JC. Even in his own handwriting, his name changed from J. Charles in the first sentence to the signature at the bottom of John C. In a letter, he said his father's name was John, so using his middle name of Charles made family life less confusing. Enlisting in the Second Battery did not ease the confusion as Charles explained in a letter to the Pension Department. "There was a man in the company named Beebe, but he was a clerk at headquarters." John or Charles? Beebe or Beede? Little wonder there was confusion.

The flexibility in his name may have been a reflection of his interests as he followed a variety of jobs in his lifetime. Charles is the name used here as that was the name listed on the Second Battery's roles.

Charles was born on a farm in Levant, Penobscot County, Maine, in 1835. He was working as a lumber man in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, in 1864, when he decided to enlist. He was mustered into the Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery on September 5, 1864, at Fort Snelling. His enlistment was credited to Taylors Falls where he was when he signed the enlistment agreement on August 30, 1864. The term of service was one year. Charles was 28 years old, stood 5' 9 1/2" tall, had gray hair and a light complexion.

Charles never rose from the rank of private during his time in the Army. He spent nearly four months of his time on a detail to cut logs for the garrison, returning to the Battery in April of 1865. When the Battery came back to Minnesota to be mustered out at Fort Snelling, Charles was with them. His army career ended on August 16, 1865.

After his adventures in the military, Charles returned to his family. His wife, Caroline, and daughter, Kate, who had been born in 1863, remained in Wisconsin while Charles was away. Another baby greeted Charles when he returned. Clarence had been born during the year Charles was in the Army. The family moved around some, sources listing their home as Eurika, Polk County, Wisconsin, Monticello in Wright County, Minnesota, and Hinkley, Minnesota. In 1889, the family moved to Glasgow, Montana, where Charles built the first livery barn in the city. He also ran a dray and water business there. The town of Glasgow was just beginning and the Beedes were among the early arrivals in the community.

Another facet of Charles' occupations in Glasgow was to act as the community's first undertaker, though it was considered unofficial. There were no undertakers in the entire area and Charles filled in with this essential service.

The Beede home on the corner of 2nd Avenue and 5th Street was the first frame house in Glasgow and Caroline began the first millinery shop in town from her home. By now, the family had grown to include seven children, the youngest born in 1888.

Charles wasn't yet finished with different occupations. He built and ran the first business in a frame building in Glasgow when he began the Waldron Hotel.



When Charles died on May 21, 1898, he left his estate to Caroline. He owned three lots with dwelling houses on them in the town of Glasgow and two more empty lots. His personal property included watches and jewelry in the value of \$10, a library worth \$25, one range horse, four work horses, seven cattle of varying ages, and two milk cows. His total estate was valued at \$1,325.

He was laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery in Glasgow with his grave overlooking the city below and a wide stretch of prairie leading to the mountains in the distance.

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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