



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Evander Briggs

The Briggs family came to Minnesota from Maine in June of 1856, and settled in Benton County near the Stearns County line. By the spring of 1859 or 1860, Benjamin Briggs abandoned his family and had little more to do with his wife or children. Neighbors called him “disreputable” and said he “contributed little if anything” to the support of the family.

Evander was born about 1842 in Freedom, Maine. It was said the lineage of his parents, Benjamin and Mehitable (Sylvester) Briggs, could be traced to 1657 in Plymouth Bay Colony.

In his early teens, Evander began working as a farm laborer on nearby farms. One boss wrote about Evander, describing him as “sturdy and industrious”. This boss went on to say that Evander was a “good, sober, faithful, industrious boy who thought a great deal of his mother. He was frugal in his habits and saved from his earnings what he could for his mother.” The boss described a time he knew Evander had bought a cow and calf, paying for the animals by working for them. Evander also used his earnings to buy “groceries and provisions” that he took home to his mother in addition to giving her what he could in cash. The boss recalled that just as Evander was enlisting, he had some hay on land nearby and sold it to the boss, but Evander asked that the payment for the hay be made to his mother.

Evander was 20 years old when he enlisted on January 14, 1862. He did not enlist alone, for his younger brother, Newbry, enlisted that same day. The boys both enlisted for three years and served as privates with the Battery.

Evander had blue eyes, light hair, light complexion, and was 5’ 9” tall.

While in the Army, Evander sent money home to his mother several times before he became sick and was sent to the hospital near Jackson, Tennessee. He died there on September 13, 1862, the cause of death listed as “chronic Diarrhoea”. After his death, his mother applied for a pension since Evander had been helping to support her. She received \$8 a month on the basis of her son’s death in the army.

Evander was buried in Tennessee, probably a temporary burial until the bodies could be removed to a national cemetery. That system was just being established, but the identities of many of the men buried and moved were lost in the process. Evander’s grave has never been found.

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.

Updated: 15 August 2017