



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Elias Fenstermacher

Elias Fenstermacher was born in Catawissa, Pennsylvania, on April 24, 1850, the son of John Fenstermacher and Mary Yetter. He was educated in Minnesota and Wisconsin. He married Phoebe Amelia Rouse on December 30, 1868. They had two sons, Edwin H. and Arthur R. and a daughter, Nellie. (She married a man by the last name of Wilber.)

Elias came to LaCrescent, Minnesota, in 1863. He was 14 years old when he was driving stage coach mails between LaCrescent and Rushford, Minnesota. He was big for his age, so he told the recruiting officers he was 18. He was examined by Dr. Mayo and passed the examination to get into the Army. He said he wanted to enlist because he was lonely and because he wanted to serve his county. His father, brother and brother-in-law were already in the Army and his mother was dead, so Elias was on his own. He was enrolled in the army on August 20, 1864, mustered out of Fort Snelling on August 16, 1865. He served with the Battery just over one year and took part in the garrison and scouting duty to which the Battery was assigned for the last year of the war.

In 1868, Elias was farming in Winona County and remained there until 1910. In 1910, he moved to Crow Wing County and lived at 601 North 3rd Avenue in Brainerd until 1916. He then moved Pillager, Lake County, MN, where he lived with his son.

In 1938, he was invited to attend the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. He was 88 years old at the time. He and his son traveled to the event by train and details of the trip were chronicled in the local newspaper.

In 1938, it was believed that Elias was the last surviving member of the Second Battery.



On January 28, 1948, at the age of 97, Elias quietly passed away. He had lived the last 37 years of his life in Crow Wing County and his death was announced on the front page of the Brainerd newspaper. He was the last Civil War veteran in the county. He was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery in Brainerd.

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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