



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Ezra Jewel

By August of 1864, everyone knew the cost of the Civil War in terms of lives lost, so it might have been a great comfort to enlist with a friend. That is what Ezra did. He and William Gallespie were both living on the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix River Valley when they went to Taylor's Falls, Minnesota, to enlist. They joined the Second Minnesota Battery of Artillery and served together until the end of the war.

Ezra was born in Vermont on November 21, 1842. He began working as a lumber man, so he probably followed the wave of eastern lumber men who came to Minnesota and Wisconsin for the timber in the 1850's. When Ezra enlisted, he was 21 years old, stood 5' 6" tall, had gray eyes, brown hair and a fair complexion.

The Second Battery spent most of the last year of the war in garrison, so Ezra did not see hard fighting in major battles. He was sent off on detailed duty in the spring of 1865 and returned to the Battery on April 5. When the Battery was mustered out at the end of the war, Ezra went back to St. Croix Falls.

On November 11, 1866, Ezra married Henrietta Cooper, and the couple stayed in the area around St. Croix Falls. They had at least one son and one daughter.

Ezra was "in the woods driving a team" on January 29, 1885, when he fell from the sleigh. His left hand was "mashed" in the accident and had to be amputated about three inches above the wrist. Six years later when Ezra applied for a pension, the examining doctor noted it his arm was clean with no particular sensitiveness or pain. He added that Ezra had never had an artificial limb.

Ezra eventually went into farming from the lumber business and it was his last occupation. He was driving a wagon in the early fall of 1907 when the team ran away. Ezra was injured by the time the wild ride was over and he never recovered. In early December, he was moved to St. Mary's Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota, for treatment. It was decided that surgery might help him, and it was scheduled for the morning of December 24, 1907.

Henrietta and her daughter, married by this time, went to spend Christmas with Ezra and to be with him when the surgery was done. The operation was performed, but Ezra died that afternoon from complications of the original injury and the strain of surgery.



Ezra's body was brought back to St. Croix Falls and laid to rest in the city cemetery, his grave marked with a white military marker.

His death was not the only tragedy Henreitta would face in her last years. On September 19, 1919, a fire broke out in her home and destroyed almost all her household goods, including her widow's pension certificate. It was Ezra's longtime friend and neighbor who came forward to help Henrietta. William Gallespie signed the affidavits necessary for her to obtain new pension papers to claim her widow's due.

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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