



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Nehemiah Doore Merrill



Nehemiah was born in Dover, Maine, on December 29, 1834. He came to Minnesota in 1855 and was a “laborer”.

Nehemiah stayed in St. Anthony for a while and then moved to Buffalo in Wright County. He was 27 years old when he enlisted in the Second Battery on January 7, 1865. While records indicate Nehemiah was living in Buffalo at the time of his enlistment, his home town was noted as being “Hartland, Sommersett, Maine”. He was 5’ 8-1/2” tall, had hazel eyes, dark hair and dark complexion. He was single when he enlisted.

Merrill served as a private, re-enlisting on March 22, 1864. Records indicate he was granted a furlough on April 18, 1864. He served with the Battery until the unit was mustered out at the end of the

war, August 16, 1865.

Nehemiah stayed in Minnesota for two years after the war, then went to Montana to try his hand at mining for three years. He decided that was not for him and returned to Wright County where he met Lydia Ireland. She also was born in Maine and they were married on July 21, 1870.

The 1875 census lists Nehemiah and Lydia as the heads of the household with Mary Ellen Ireland, age 15, living with them. In 1876, the couple moved to Ellsworth in Meeker County where they took up farming. Their household makeup had changed by the 1885 census and Charles Leiberling, age 23, was living with the Merrills. The 1895 census lists “Augusta” Merrill with all the same information as Lydia, whose middle initial was A. By the 1905 census, she is back to being Lydia, so it is safe to assume Lydia and Augusta are the same woman.

Nehemiah was a member of the G.A.R. Post in Litchfield, Minnesota. His photograph, in G.A.R. uniform, has been preserved in the archives of the Meeker County Historical Society and a color pastel drawing of the same photo hangs on the wall of the G.A.R. Hall. He applied for a pension and it was granted in 1890.

Nehemiah farmed until his death on November 9, 1906. He was out tending to his farm when he was overcome by heart failure. Lydia found him lying near the granary. He was buried in the Ellsworth Cemetery, a small cemetery in the southern part of the county with full honors from the Litchfield GAR Post.



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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