

Moses Jacob Ezekiel

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Moses Jacob Ezekiel, or **Sir Moses Ezekiel** (October 28, 1844 – March 27, 1917) was a soldier in the Confederate States Army and a U.S. sculptor, although he lived and worked in Rome for the majority of his career.

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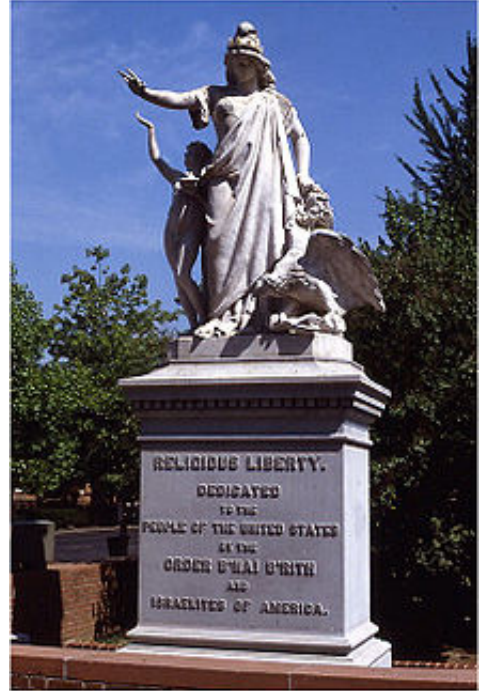
Biography

Ezekiel was born in Richmond, Virginia, and attended the common schools. He was a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, was the first Jewish cadet to attend VMI, and was a highly decorated Confederate veteran of the American Civil War. He and other cadets from VMI marched 80 miles north from Lexington and fought at the 1864 Battle of New Market, where Ezekiel was wounded in a fight with Union army troops under Franz Sigel. After his recovery, he served with the cadets in Richmond to train new recruits for the army. Shortly before the end of the war, he served in the trenches defending the city.

Following the Civil War, Ezekiel returned to VMI to finish his education, graduating in 1866. He moved to Cincinnati in 1868, then to Berlin in 1869, where he studied at the Royal Academy of Art under Professor Albert Wolf. In Europe he completed the sculptures and paintings for which he is famous, including a memorial at VMI that commemorates the small cemetery where the 10 cadets killed at New Market were buried. He was admitted into the Society of Artists, Berlin, and at age 29 was the first foreigner to win the Michel-Beer Prix de Rome for a bas relief entitled "Israel".

Around 1880 Ezekiel created eleven larger-than-life sized statues of famous artists that were

Moses Jacob Ezekiel



Religious Liberty, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Born	October 28, 1844 Richmond, Virginia
Died	March 27, 1917 (aged 72) Rome, Italy
Nationality	American
Field	Sculpture, Soldier
Training	Virginia Military Institute

originally intended for niches in the Corcoran Gallery. Since the early 1960s they have resided in the Norfolk Botanical Garden in Norfolk, Virginia.

Although Ezekiel never married, he is known to have fathered one illegitimate child, Alice Johnson, whose mother was a mulatto maid. Johnson, who never took her father's name, although she remained in contact with him throughout his life, became a school teacher and later married the prominent African American surgeon Daniel Hale Williams.^[1]

Ezekiel died in Rome, Italy, and was temporarily entombed there. In 1921, he was buried at the foot of his Confederate Memorial in Section 16 of Arlington National Cemetery.

In his lifetime, Ezekiel received numerous honors including being decorated by King Umberto I of Italy and knighted by King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy; the "Crosses for Merit and Art" from the Emperor of Germany; another from Prince Frederick Johann of Saxe-Meiningen; and the awards of "Chevalier" and "Officer of the Crown of Italy" (1910) from the King of Italy. Ezekiel also received the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Palermo, Italy; the Silver Medal at the Saint Louis Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904); the Raphael Medal from the Art Society of Urbino, Italy. The honorific "Sir" by which Ezekiel is often referred is technically incorrect as Ezekiel was not knighted by the monarch of the United Kingdom. More properly, his title was Cavaliere Moses Ezekiel, because of his Italian knighthood, or Moses Ritter von Ezekiel, because of his German honors. Ezekiel initiated this error by translating his Italian title into the English "Sir" on his visiting cards, resulting in the honorific by which he is now most commonly known.^[2]



Bas relief of Sarah Workum
(in private collection)

Works

- *Religious Liberty* at National Museum of American Jewish History (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1876
- *Statuary Vista*, 11 sculptures of artists, Norfolk Botanical Garden (Norfolk, Virginia), 1879–1884
- *Jefferson Monument* (for Thomas Jefferson) (Louisville, Kentucky), 1901
- *Virginia Mourning her Dead* (Lexington, Virginia), 1903
 - another version exists at the Museum of the Confederacy (Richmond, Virginia)
- *A. J. Drexel*, Statue and Bust at Drexel University (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1904 and 1905
- *Confederate Soldiers' Memorial* at Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington, Virginia), 1914
- *Edgar Allan Poe* at University of Baltimore (Baltimore, Maryland)

References

- [^] The Booker T. Washington Papers, Vol.9, page 396, November 1907, U. of Illinois Press (<http://www.historycooperative.org/btw/Vol.9/html/396.html>)
 - [^] Making of America Project (1939). *The North American Review* (<http://books.google.com/?id=WoYYAAAAMAAJ&q=%22the+right+to+use+the+title%22+date:1994-1994&dq=%22the+right+to+use+the+title%22+date:1994-1994>) . University of Northern Iowa. <http://books.google.com/?id=WoYYAAAAMAAJ&q=%22the+right+to+use+the+title%22+date:1994-1994&dq=%22the+right+to+use+the+title%22+date:1994-1994>.
- Gutmann, Joseph and Stanley F. Chyet (ed): *Moses Jacob Ezekiel: Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian*, Detroit : Wayne State University Press, 1975. ISBN 0-8143-1525-9
 - Harlan, et al. (editors), Booker T. Washington Papers, Vol. 9, p. 396
 - Wrenshall, Katharine H. (November 1909). "An American Sculptor In Rome: The Work of Sir Moses Ezekiel" (<http://books.google.com/books?id=bHIAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA12255>) ". *The World's Work: A History of Our Time XIX*: 12255–12263.
 - *New York Times*, "Ezekiel, Sculptor, Arrives: Here to Attend Unveiling of His Statue of Jefferson in Charlottesville", May 25, 1910.

External links

- Biography of Moses Jacob Ezekiel, at website of Arlington National Cemetery (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/ezekiel.htm>)
- Photographs of Confederate Soldiers' Memorial, at website of Arlington National Cemetery (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/csa-mem.htm>)
- Jewish Civil War History (http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/moses_ezekiel.html)

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Categories: 1844 births | 1917 deaths | American sculptors | Jewish sculptors | People from Richmond, Virginia | Confederate States Army soldiers | People of Virginia in the American Civil War | Virginia Military Institute alumni

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