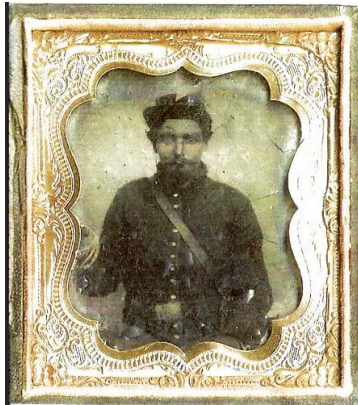




## 2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

### George Sylvester Garver



George S. Garver was born in 1830 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He moved first to Wisconsin where he lived in Pine Bluff and Juneau before he moved to St. Charles, Minnesota, in 1861.

He was single when he enlisted in the Second Minnesota Light Artillery. He was 5' 8" tall, had hazel eyes, black hair and a light complexion. He was a farmer from St. Charles, Winona County, Minnesota. George said the examining surgeon, "stripped him stark naked and given a thorough examination as to his physical condition" prior to being allowed to enlist.

George mustered into the unit on February 20, 1862. He re-enlisted on March 22, 1864, and served with the rank of private until the unit mustered out in August of 1865. During the war, George joined the Bible Class and remained a member for its duration. He was detailed to be a teamster on December 21, 1864, and was entitled to extra pay for this duty. He was often away from the Battery several weeks at a time when he was driving supply wagons. Another Battery member, William Spaulding, noted that George's nickname was "Zollicoffer," though he gave no explanation of why George was known by that name.

Handling the mules and horses of the Battery might well have been considered hazardous duty for George. His first tangle with trouble was when he was thrown from the mule (or horse--accounts differ on which animal it was) and it "trampled him some" according to another member of the Battery. George called the animal a mule and said it had escaped and he was assisting in capturing it when the injuries occurred. The injuries caused him be excused from duty for a time, but he did not go to the hospital. George treated what he called a "rupture" himself by "bathing the injured place with whiskey". This was in May or June of 1862.

In March of 1863, George was detailed to take the horses out to be pastured. He was bringing them back in, riding one, when they came to a ditch. The horse jumped or stumbled while crossing the ditch and threw George. At first, George thought he had broken his arm, but when he went to a doctor who was with the Battery, the doctor told him it was badly bruised, more trouble than if it had been broken. George used a sling for several weeks.

Mules caused more trouble for George when the Battery was camped at Stringer's Farm near Chattanooga in July of 1864. He had taken the convalescing horses out to graze when he saw that one of them had its feet tangled in a halter. As he was trying to untangle the horse, the animal reared up and its knee hit George in

the mouth, knocking out four teeth. Once again, George did not seek treatment from a doctor as the surgeon he talked to about the teeth said they were too loose to ever do him any good and nothing would change that. The teeth fell out.

George remained with the Battery until it was mustered out on August 16, 1865 at Fort Snelling. He went back to St. Charles and his farm. In 1867, he went east and stayed near Lancaster, Pennsylvania for about a year and a half when he returned to his farm in St. Charles where he stayed for the rest of his life. That life got a bit more exciting in the spring of 1877 when George and his family returned home from church one Sunday. They found that “some miscreant” entered their home and stolen “a small amount of pocket money belonging to his children and several valuable papers.” George and his wife, Harriet, had three children; two girls and a boy. Harriet died in 1892 and George remarried Mary Ellsbury on April 21, 1895.

On August 24, 1903, George passed away while he was living at the Soldiers Home in St. Paul. His body was returned to St. Charles and was buried in the Hillside Cemetery with both a family stone and a traditional white Veteran's Administration stone.



*Researched and compiled by the reenactors of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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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