

THE CHARGER

February 2013

493rd Meeting

Vol. 34, #6

Tonight's Program:



Edwin M. Stanton Buckeye Warlord

Edwin M. Stanton
(12/19/14-12/24/69) was Secretary of War under Pres. Abraham Lincoln. Admitted to the Ohio bar in 1836, Stanton became a highly successful attorney. In 1847 he

moved to Pittsburgh and nine years later to Washington, D.C., where he built a wide practice in the federal courts.

Although a staunch Democrat and critic of President-elect Lincoln, he was made legal adviser to Simon Cameron, and, when Cameron resigned, Stanton was appointed Secretary of War and proved an able, energetic administrator. He insisted on tighter management of his department, gave short shrift to patronage seekers, and continually pushed for a more aggressive prosecution of the war. He provoked violent quarrels with nearly every important federal military commander.

After the assassination of Lincoln, Stanton agreed to continue under Pres. Johnson. Stanton was soon at loggerheads with Johnson, however, over the nature of Reconstruction, using his position to foster stricter Reconstruction measures than the president desired. When Johnson tried to remove Stanton from office, he refused, claiming that the Tenure of Office Act protected his position. Johnson's persistence resulted in his impeachment. When the Senate vote fell one short of conviction, Stanton had no alternative but to surrender his office and return to private law practice. He died four days after his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court by Pres. Ulysses S. Grant.

Tonight's Speaker:

William F. B. Vodrey

William Vodrey is a magistrate of the Cleveland Municipal Court and a former president of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. He gives presentations on a wide variety of Civil War topics to roundtables and historical societies and has spoken to the Cleveland Roundtable on many occasions.

Mr. Vodrey graduated from Oberlin College and earned his law degree at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. He is a member of the Civil War Preservation Trust, the Blue & Gray Education Society, and the Ohio Historical Society, and a former re-enactor with the 51st Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Co. B, where he, in his own words, "skyrocketed to the rank of corporal." His essay, "[George Washington: Hero of the Confederacy?](#)" appeared in the October 2004 issue of *American History* magazine.

**Date: Wednesday,
February 13, 2013**

**Place: Judson Manor
1890 E. 107th Street
Cleveland, Ohio**

**Time: Drinks 6 pm
Dinner 6:45 pm**

Reservations: Please send an email to ccwrt1956@yahoo.com with your reservation, or call Dan Zeiser at (440) 449-9311 by 9 pm the Sunday before the meeting.

Meal: Entree, vegetable, rolls, salad, and dessert.

**CLEVELAND
CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
FOUNDED 1957**

President: **Michael Wells** m.wells@csuohio.edu
Vice President: **Jim Heflich** laureldoc@gmail.com
Treasurer: **Patrick Bray** pbray360@aol.com
Secretary: **Chris Fortunato** learnedhand@live.com

Directors:

Lisa Kempfer Paul Burkholder
C. Ellen Connally Howard Besser

website: www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com

email: pkburkholder@gmail.com

Editor - THE CHARGER - Dan Zeiser

email: danzeiser@aol.com

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Past Presidents

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1968 **Frank Moran**
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1965 **Lester Swift**
1964 **Guy DiCarlo Jr.**
1963 **Paul Guenther**
1962 **Edward Downer**
1961 **Charles Clarke**
1960 **Howard Preston**
1959 **John Cullen Jr.**
1958 **George Farr Jr.**
1957 **Kenneth Grant**

President's Message

This month we again welcome one of our own to the CCWRT podium. Past CCWRT president and Cleveland Municipal Court Magistrate William Vodrey will speak to us about Edwin Stanton. It is my impression that Stanton has been tagged by some as a bend sinister force in Lincoln's cabinet, and on my preliminary excursions for our 2012 field trip, I was told that Robert Lincoln said that he knew a member of his father's cabinet was involved in the assassination. Of course, he refused to identify this person. Probably wrongly, I immediately thought of Stanton. As an ambitious and successful Ohio and Pennsylvania politician, Stanton is one of many high achievers in government or the military who would have passed unknown into history had it not been for the Civil War. He certainly worked hard as Secretary of War. I look forward to learning more about him.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Wells



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

2012-2013 SCHEDULE

January 9, 2013

Dick Crews Annual Debate: President Lincoln's Biggest Mistake

Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey

September 12, 2012

South Mountain

**John
Michael
Priest**



February 13, 2013



***Edwin M. Stanton
Buckeye Warlord***

William F. B. Vodrey

October 10, 2012



Morgan's Raid

Lester Horwitz

March 13, 2013

The Assassination

Michael Kaufman



November 14, 2012



Fort Pillow

**Dr. John V.
Cimprich**

April 10, 2013

Lincoln

Harold Holzer



December 12, 2012

The Irish and the Civil War

Dr. W. Dennis Keating



May 8, 2013

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Players Present: Grant and Lee at the White House

Steubenville, Ohio

In 1786-1787, the United States erected Fort Steuben to protect the government surveyors mapping the land west of the Ohio River, and named the fort in honor of Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, a Prussian-born military officer who was a major general under Washington during the Revolution. When the surveyors completed their task a few years later, the fort was abandoned. In the meantime, settlers had built homes around the fort; they named their settlement La Belle.

On July 29, 1797 Jefferson County was organized by a proclamation of Governor Arthur St. Clair, and La Belle was selected as the County seat. The town was subsequently renamed Steubenville, in honor of the abandoned fort, and was platted in the same year. Bezaliel (Bezaleel) Wells and James Ross were the founders of the city. Wells, a government surveyor born in Baltimore, received about 1,000 acres of land west of the Ohio River, and Ross, a lawyer from Pittsburgh, owned land north of his. The two men were responsible for the layout of the city.

On March 1, 1803, Ohio was admitted to the Union as the 17th state. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Steubenville was primarily a port town, and the rest of the county was small villages and farms. Steubenville received a city charter in 1851. However, in 1856, Frazier, Kilgore and Company erected a rolling mill (the forerunner of steel mills) and the Steubenville Coal and Mining Company sank a coal shaft. The city was also a stop along the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad that connected Pittsburgh to Chicago and St. Louis



Clockwise from top left: Historic Fort Steuben, the First Federal Land Office, the Edwin M. Stanton Memorial, and the Fountain at Historic Fort Steuben

Steubenville during the Civil War



From its earliest days, Steubenville's destiny has been tied to the Ohio River. In the early and mid-nineteenth century, the city's location on the northwestern bank of the Ohio River cemented deep economic ties to the south. At the foot of Market Street the world came and went to the wharf boat moored against the steep riverbank. The ferryboat crossed the river from Virginia, linking Jefferson County to Virginia. Packets and steamboats came and went from Wellsville, East Liverpool, Marietta, Pittsburgh, Parkersburg, Cincinnati, and beyond. Warehouses along the waterfront

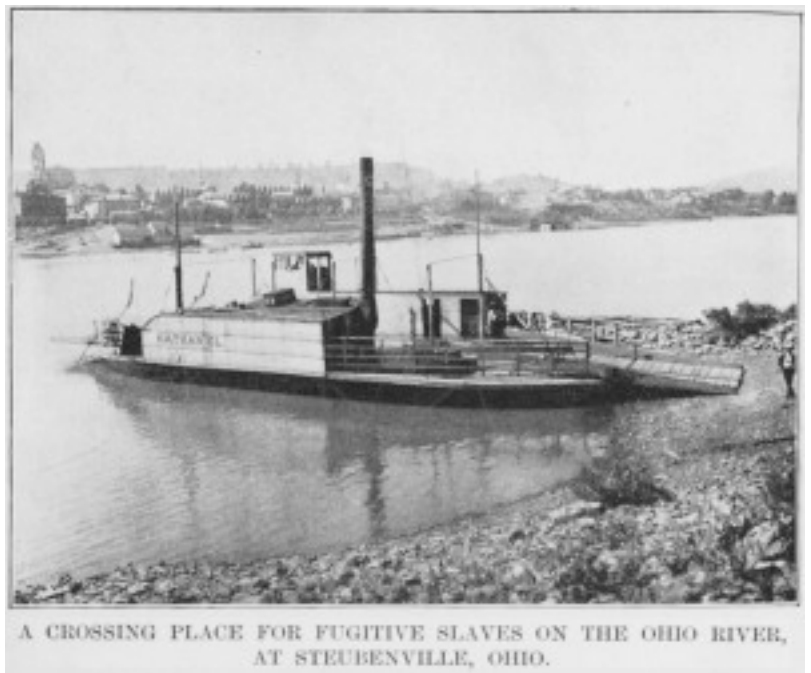
were stacked with goods ranging from fresh produce and bales of cotton grown in the deep south to the latest Paris fashions that had been brought from across the ocean and unloaded in New Orleans. Also disembarking were sons and daughters of many of the deep south's proudest planters, bound for the Female Seminary and Latin Academy, two of the finest schools of their type west of the Appalachian Mountains.

From the waterfront Steubenville announced her presence to the world. Salesmen left to sell their products along the Mississippi, Tennessee, Missouri, and Red Rivers. Steubenville glass, cloth, and iron products were well known throughout the south, the town's reach touching any place the waters flowed. There is little wonder that the Steubenville dailies reported the market conditions and latest news from Cincinnati, Saint Louis, Memphis, and New Orleans. Throughout the early 19th century, steamboats, flatboats, and ferryboats arrived at the foot of Market Street. Many brought passengers and goods from the nearby cities of Wheeling and Pittsburgh. Others came from far off places like New Orleans and Memphis. Steubenville was linked with Kentucky, Tennessee, and even the Gulf of Mexico by the ribbon of water that rolls past it from Pittsburgh.

BORN ON THE WATER

From his birth in January of 1833, George O'Neal was a part of this world. His family appeared on the Steubenville scene about the same time as George. Their arrival coincided with the halcyon days of Steubenville steamboating, a legacy George's father, Abner, and his brothers helped to construct. Owning a succession of side wheelers, they plied the rivers from the headwaters of the Ohio in Pittsburgh to the deepest reaches of the south.

Growing up in the pilothouse, George was an experienced pilot by the time he reached the age of majority. Growing to know the ever changing eddies and flows of the rivers, by the early 1850s, young George was piloting boats independently on the lower Ohio River and down the mighty river known as "the Father of the Waters".



*In the mid 1850s, the role of steamboats in Steubenville changed with the arrival of the railroads. Although Steubenville steamboats continued to reach points south and increasingly further west, profits dwindled. The bread and butter of the Steubenville boat trade became more localized. The O'Neals owned a shallow draft packet named after one of the town's most powerful citizens: the **William Means**. George returned home to*

help pilot the **Means**, which was known universally as the O'Neal, and he and his crew engaged in a fierce rivalry with the crew of a competitor for the daily Steubenville to Wheeling run.

Commercial rivalry soon took on the air of spectator sport as the competitors worked to find any way possible to increase the speed of their Wheeling run. Six days a week, crowds gathered in the early morning along the waterfront. Excitement would build as daylight broke and the rival boats built up heads of steam at the dock and watched the other for signs of movement. The decks thronged with passengers and each boat had its own legion of fans. One can imagine the bets loosely flowing and the steam build in the boilers as the waterfront buzzed with the excitement. Suddenly, one of the boats would lurch from the docks to the cheers of its supporters. That, according to a later historian, is when the excitement would really begin:

"...sometimes when the "BAKER" would try to forge ahead of the "Means" the latter would "lock" that is run boat against the other until the guards would overlap and hold the steamers together in close embrace while the crews and even passengers would exchange left handed compliments with each other."

It was noted that the rivalry was carried on, for the most part, genially as those engaged all worshipped together at St Paul's Episcopal Church on Sundays. In time, the rivals would join together and go into business.



Although this is a postwar view of Steubenville, the general layout of the town remains the same.



The first Stanton postage stamp, issue of 1871.



Stanton with his son, Edwin.



Camp Steubenville as portrayed in the November 8, 1900 edition of THE NATIONAL Tribune. Note the proximity to the railroad. Originally titled "I Took My First Breakfast In Camp"



REUNION

In 1897, a grizzled group of men revisited the location where their most important adventure began. Like the boys in blue, Mingo Junction had changed quite a bit in the last thirty five years. In their youth, green fields and orchards had spread across Mingo Bottoms. Here in 1862, young men prepared for the fratricide of Civil War. "Time has brought change to our old

camp and drill ground on Mingo bottom," observed veteran John Patton. "It is no more a quiet pasture ground, but is covered with furnace buildings."



Wide Awakes March in New York City (HARPERS WEEKLY)

The Cadiz Democratic Sentinel October 10, 1860

The friends of Stephen A. Douglas had a meeting in front of the Court House on last Thursday Evening. A very harmless address was delivered by Capt. George Webster of Steubenville, the Douglas Elector for this district. The crowd was respectable in size, principally of Breckenridge Democrats and Republicans.

The conduct of the occasion of the new republican organization in Cadiz called the WIDE AWAKES was not respectful, to say the least of it. Instead, their crowd collected in the court house yard, they should have gone to some other part of the town to collect them—And if collecting the crowd there was not disrespectful enough, they had the ill manners to beat their drums and march their procession through the crowd listening to Captain Webster. We were astonished at the leaders of that organization acting in the manner that they did. Capt. Webster was a stranger in our place, and a very respectful citizen, and deserved to be treated with gentility and respect. Let all respectable citizens be treated hereafter with that gentility and respect their position entitles them to.

The actions of the Wide Awakes on that occasion we trust was done thoughtlessly, not with intention to be disrespectful, and that hereafter they will act in a more gentlemanly manner.

These selections of Steubenville during the Civil War were taken from www.steubenvillecivilwar.org. It is run by Jeff Evans and has some valuable and interesting information. Click on the link for more.



NEXT MONTH

THE ASSASSINATION

MICHAEL KAUFMAN





Steubenville Civil War veterans standing in front of Stanton statue, which stands in front of the Jefferson County Courthouse. The statue was unveiled in 1911



Portrait of Major Anson G. McCook from Steubenville, 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He was a member of the family known as the "Fighting McCooks."