

THE CHARGER

September 2012

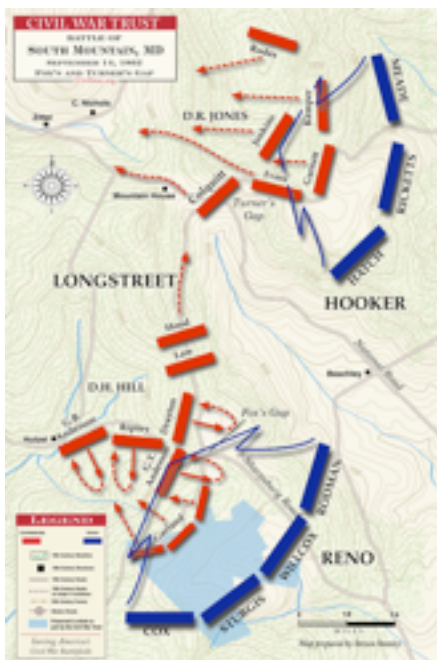
488th Meeting

Vol. 34, #1

Tonight's Program:

The Battle for South Mountain September 14, 1862

After his success at Second Manassas, Gen. Robert E. Lee led the Army of Northern Virginia on an invasion of Maryland in September of 1862. Lee divided his army, sending a portion of it into western Maryland while Stonewall Jackson's wing attempted to capture the Federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry. The bold plan was jeopardized on September 13 when a mislaid copy of Lee's orders revealing the Confederates' plans and positions were given to Union commander Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan. Emboldened by this intelligence, McClellan tried to force his army through three passes in the South Mountain range on September 14, 1862. Intense fighting drew increasing numbers of troops of both armies to Fox's, Turner's, and Crampton's gaps. Though the Federals ultimately gained control of all three passes, stubborn resistance on the part of the Southerners bought Lee precious time to begin the process of reuniting his army, and set the stage for the Battle of Antietam, two days later.

*Tonight's Speaker:*

John Michael Priest

John Michael Priest has written or edited 16 books and numerous articles on the American Civil War. His books include *Antietam: The Soldiers' Battle*, *Before Antietam: The Battle for South Mountain*, *Nowhere to Run: The Wilderness, May 4th and 5th, 1864*, and *Into the Fight: Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg*. His articles have appeared in *The Civil War Times Illustrated*, *North & South*, and the *Potomac Magazine*. Mr. Price is a licensed battlefield guide at Antietam Military Park and has served as historical consultant to several television and movie productions.

Mr. Priest was born in Georgetown, DC. He received a B.A. in History and Secondary Education from Loyola College (Baltimore) and a M.A. in Social Sciences from Hood College (Frederick, Maryland) and taught World History, Government, U.S. History, Civil War History, and Psychology for the Washington County Board of Education from 1980 - 2011. He received a Maryland Council for the Social Services Program Excellence Award for his inspired teaching. Mr. Priest lives in Clear Spring, Maryland.

Date: Wednesday,
September 12, 2012

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, salad, and dessert.

**CLEVELAND
CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
FOUNDED 1957**

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Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Past Presidents

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1959 John Cullen Jr.
1958 George Farr Jr.
1957 Kenneth Grant

President's Message

Welcome to another Cleveland Civil War Roundtable year. We have been meeting since 1956, and as always, our programs include local and national speakers on a variety of Civil War topics. In between programs, make sure you peruse the Charger and the other roundtable newsletters available to our members. Questions and comments are welcome and can be directed to our officers and board members. We start our programs with a look at South Mountain and Antietam, appropriate for the 150 anniversary of these September battles. See you soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Wells

Editor's Note: President Mike Wells told me he would be brief. As you can see, he is off to a good start.

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2012-2013 SCHEDULE**

September 12, 2012

***South
Mountain***

**John
Michael
Priest**



October 10, 2012



Morgan's Raid

Lester Horwitz

November 14, 2012



Fort Pillow

**Dr. John V.
Cimprich**

December 12, 2012

***The Irish and the
Civil War***

Dr. W. Dennis Keating



January 9, 2013

***Dick Crews Annual Debate:
President Lincoln's Biggest Mistake***

Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey

February 14, 2013



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

William F. B. Vodrey

March 13, 2013

The Assassination

Michael Kaufman



April 10, 2013

Lincoln

Harold Holzer



May 8, 2013

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

8th Ohio Volunteer Infantry (OVI)

by Dennis Keating

During the 2009 Cleveland Civil War Roundtable field trip to Gettysburg, our group laid a wreath at the monument honoring the 8th OVI. This Ohio regiment, known as “The Fighting Fools,” is perhaps best known for its role in helping to repel the Pickett-Pettigrew charge on 3 July 1863. The 8th OVI was part of the “Gibraltar” brigade of Alexander Hays’s division, in Winfield Hancock’s II Corps of the Army of the Potomac. When the 8th entered the battlefield on July 2, it mustered 209 men. After the repulse of the charge on July 3, only 107 were left to fight. The regiment had been placed out in the open fields west of the Emmitsburg Road in front of the main Union defense. As Pettigrew’s division surged toward them, the 8th fired into the vulnerable flank of John Brockenbrough’s Virginia brigade, which broke and ran. The 8th then turned and continued to fire into the advancing Confederates of Joe Davis’s brigade. Despite its small numbers, the 8th took over 300 Confederate prisoners and captured the colors of the 14th Virginia and the 16th and 34th North Carolina regiments, for which two of its members received the Medal of Honor. As the regiment returned to the Union ranks, the 14th Indiana presented arms in recognition of the courageous action of these Ohioans. Later that summer after the belated pursuit of Lee’s retreating Army of Northern Virginia, the 8th was sent to New York City for riot duty following the deadly protests against the draft. However, it arrived after the riot had ended.

The 8th was formed in late April and early May 1861 in response to President Abraham Lincoln’s call for 75,000 volunteer to suppress the Southern rebellion. On July 24, these three month volunteers from Northern Ohio were sworn in for three years. The ten companies represented the cities of Bucyrus, Cleveland, Fremont, Medina, Norwalk, Sandusky, and Tiffin. Company B from Cleveland was known as the “Hibernian Guards” and was designated as right flank skirmishers.

In July 1861, the 8th was sent to (West) Virginia and took part in George McClellan’s campaign to wrest that future state from the Confederacy. The 8th joined the 4th Ohio, the 14th Indiana, and the 7th West Virginia regiments to form the nucleus of a brigade that would become known as the Gibraltar brigade. As part of James Shields’s division sent to the Shenandoah Valley, the 8th fought its first major battle (First Kernstown) near Winchester on 23 March 1862 against Stonewall Jackson, suffering twenty-five percent casualties.

In July 1862, the 8th was transferred to McClellan’s Army of the Potomac and its II Corps. The 8th served as a rearguard as the army retreated from the Peninsula, ending McClellan’s attempt to capture Richmond. It arrived too late to participate in Second Bull Run. Commanded by Nathan Kimball, colonel of the 14th Indiana (the First Brigade, Third Division, Second Corps), it fought at the bloody battle of Antietam in the division of W. H. French. It was in the heavy fighting around the Sunken Lane, where it battled D.H. Hill’s entrenched division. It lost 162 officers and men killed and wounded, about half of its number. The bravery of its brigade earned it the name of the “Gibraltar” brigade from Corps commander Edwin Sumner.

The 8th next headed to Falmouth, Virginia, with the army now headed by McClellan’s reluctant successor Ambrose Burnside. In his ill-advised attack on Marye’s Heights, the 8th (now commanded by Lt. Colonel Franklin Sawyer) held buildings in the town of Fredericksburg, having driven out skirmishers from Barksdale’s brigade. Following this disastrous debacle, the 8th participated in Burnside’s failed “Mud March.” At Chancellorsville, the army now under the command of Joseph Hooker, the 8th was mostly held in reserve, suffering only a few casualties.

Following the battle of Gettysburg and its brief sojourn in New York City, the 8th rejoined the Army of the Potomac and the II Corps (but now the Gibraltar Brigade became the Third Brigade, Second Division (under

John Gibbon)) for U.S. Grant's Overland campaign. On 5 May 1864, the brigade was attacked in the Wilderness by A.P. Hill's Corps. The 8th (and the 7th W. Va.) successfully recaptured two cannon lost earlier that day by the VI Corps. On 6 May 1864, the 8th advanced until Longstreet's corps pushed the Union forces back. Put into reserve, the brigade was again sent forward against the advance of both Hill's and Longstreet's corps amidst the inferno that was the Wilderness.

With Grant's decision to move south to try to flank Lee, the II Corps became the rear guard of Grant's army as it headed toward Spotsylvania Court House. On 12 May 1864, the brigade became part of Emory Upton's attack on the "Mule Shoe" salient that initially breached Lee's defense. Lt. Thomas Galwey, just seventeen years old and commanding Cleveland's Company B, wrote of the Bloody Angle: "Nothing can describe the confusion, the savage blood curdling yells, the murderous faces, the awful curses, super human hardihood, and the grisly horror of the melee! Of all the battles I took part in, Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania exceeded all the rest in stubbornness, ferocity, and in courage. I cannot understand how any of us survived it." Both the brigade commander and the 8th's commander, Franklin Sawyer, were wounded. Another soldier in the 8th received the Medal of Honor for the capture of a Confederate flag.

Following this desperate engagement, the 8th again headed south, arriving at Cold Harbor to participate in the II Corps' unsuccessful attack on June 1 that cost so many casualties to the Army of the Potomac. Following this bloody defeat, it was once again moving south as Grant raced Lee to Petersburg, where, following the failure to capture the city in fighting 15-17 June 1864, the siege began. The brigade, with its service term expiring on July 13, was then placed in reserve. On June 23, the 8th was placed in the army's front line and survived a rebel bombardment without suffering casualties. The next day (24 June 1864), the brigade was withdrawn and boarded a steamboat at City Point for the trip to Washington City, arriving June 26. From there, they entrained for the trip home to Ohio.

The 8th arrived in Cleveland on July 3 and was feted by political and civic figures. The regiment was mustered out there on July 13. Those present numbered 168, compared to its cumulative total strength of 45 officers and 944 enlisted men. Over 200 absent (sick, wounded and prisoners of war) were also mustered out. Some re-enlisted and were assigned to the 4th Ohio.

During these three years, the 8th suffered a total of 198 casualties. Franklin Sawyer listed six battles and seventy skirmishes in which the regiment was engaged. Cleveland's Company B totaled 101 officers and men and suffered the following 45 casualties:

Officers: 3 Killed at Antietam, 1 Wounded at Spotsylvania

Non-commissioned officers (sergeants and corporals): 1 Killed at Gettysburg, 1 at Spotsylvania, Wounded - 3 at Antietam, 1 at Gettysburg, 2 at the Wilderness, 1 at Spotsylvania, 1 at Petersburg

Men: Killed - Wire Bridge: 1, Antietam: 2, Fredericksburg: 2, Gettysburg: 2, Spotsylvania: 1

Wounded - Antietam: 13, Fredericksburg: 1, Mine Run: 2, Gettysburg: 3, Wilderness: 2, Spotsylvania: 2, North Ana: 1, Petersburg: 1

(Six men were wounded in two battles; I listed only the battles where they received their first wound.)

Company B suffered its largest number of casualties at Antietam: 5 killed and 16 wounded

TOTAL (45): Killed-11, Wounded-34

In addition to the monument at Gettysburg, there is a monument honoring the 8th OVI at Antietam. At the Soldiers and Sailors' Monument in Cleveland, the members of the 8th from Cuyahoga County are remembered. Perhaps the most famous member of the 8th Ohio was dentist Everton J. Conger of Company F from Fremont.

He transferred to the 3rd West Virginia Cavalry, suffering wounds that forced him from the field. He served in Lafayette Baker's National Detective Police. His fame came from his participation with the District of Columbia cavalry unit that captured Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth and his accomplice David Herold in April 1865. He carried the dead Booth's diary to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton.

References:

Baumgartner, Richard A. *Buckeye Blood: Ohio at Gettysburg*. Blue Acorn Press, 2003.

Downes, T.M.F. *A Brief History of the 8th Regt. OVI*

Hartzell, Stephen J. *Roster of the 8th Regt. Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Gibraltar Brigade, Army of the Potomac*. www.historynotebook.com/8thOVI.html

Sawyer, Franklin. *8th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Gibraltar Brigade, Army of the Potomac*. 1881 (Blue Acorn Press reprints, 1994, 2005).



Captain James K. O'Reilly
Company B/E



Corporal Jason Jack
Company G

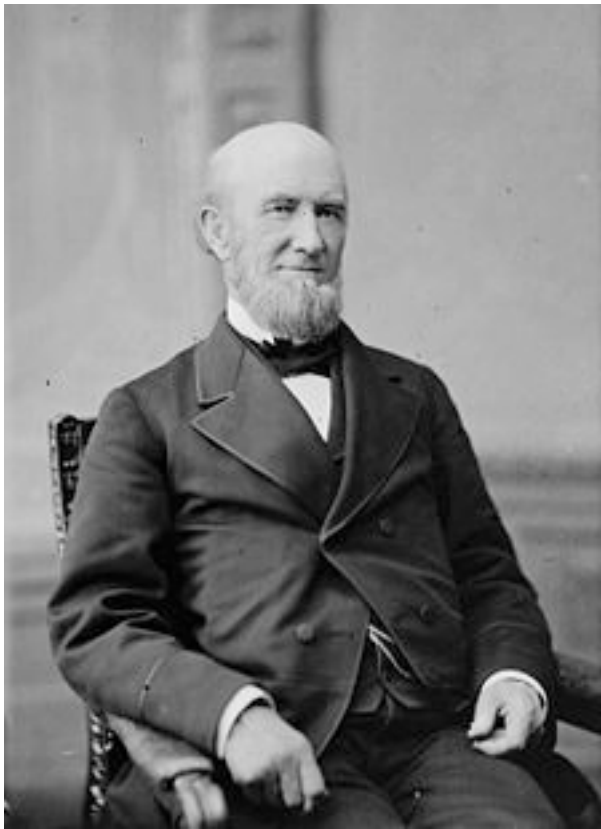


Lt. Col. Franklin Sawyer



The national colors of the 8th OVI

Dennis Keating is a professor at Cleveland State University's Maxine Goodman Levine College of Urban Affairs and a past president of the Roundtable.



Left: James B. Eads, builder of the City-class gunboats.

Below: The four ironclads gunboats commanded by USN Flag Officer Andrew Hull Foote. Three were City-class gunboats

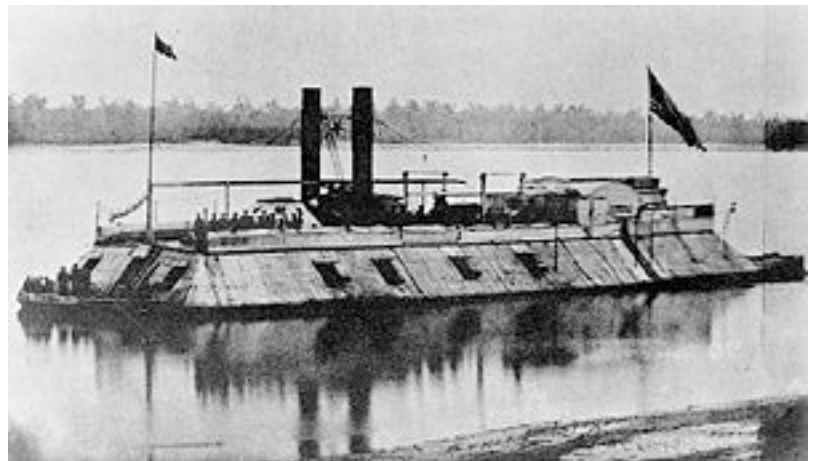
Top left: USS *Cincinnati*

Top right: USS *Carondolet*

Bottom left: USS *St. Louis*, later renamed the USS *Baron DeKalb*

Bottom right: USS *Essex*, originally constructed in 1856 as the steam powered ferry *New Era*

The other four City-class ironclads were the USS *Cairo*, *Louisville*, *Mound City*, and *Pittsburg*.





Field Trip September 20-23
 The Beginning of the Rivers Campaign
 Contact Mike Wells at m.wells@csuohio.edu

Of Note:

Starting next month, there will be a new feature "The Book I am Reading." In 100 words or less, please write about a current book you are reading or just finished and why you liked or did not like it. Email it to me for publication.

Last April, our member from England, Stuart Kay, a Lee devotee, travelled from London to attend the meeting on Lincoln. Some of you met him. He recently became engaged to, as he describes her, his "long suffering" girlfriend. Congratulations, Stu! We hope to see you again soon.



NEXT MONTH
MORGAN'S RAID
LESTER HORWITZ