

# THE HISTORICAL LOG

To Preserve and Present the Heritage of Warren County

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Victoria Van Harlingen

### *Don't Be a Scrooge!*

#### *Enjoy the Holidays While Supporting Warren County Charities*

Warren County has many wonderful events around the holidays for families to enjoy. Several of those events are presented by the Warren County Historical Society. Last year the Historical Society decided to spread the holiday cheer a little further and partnered with several Warren County charities—collecting donations for each as the holidays counted down to the end of the year. We will do the same this year.

It all started with a call from Tammy Stebelton of Big Brothers & Sisters of Warren & Clinton Counties, who asked if their “biggs and littles” could help with a museum project. We had just launched a gingerbread house baking contest and thought they would be a perfect match to help set up displays of the entries. We decided the entry fees for the contest would all be donated to the charity.

Warren County Community Services had partnered with the Historical Society during the previous summer, providing transportation services at the Turtlecreek Summer Music Festival. WCCS is another private non-profit that helps families with many needs. Some of their better known programs are Meals on Wheels for the elderly and disabled and their Early Learning Centers for preschool-age children. The Historical Society staff decided to donate one dollar of each admission to “Christmas at Glendower” to Warren County Community Services.



*Entry fees and other donations from the Gingerbread House Display & Contest will benefit Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Warren & Clinton Counties.*



“Visiting Glendower [Historic Mansion] all decorated for Christmas has been a family tradition for Warren County citizens for over 70 years,” declared Glendower’s manager Elizabeth Grauwelman. “Now Warren Countians get to enjoy Glendower and at the same time know that part of their admission fee is helping families in need all over Warren County.”

Warren County Historical Society Historian John Zimkus has been presenting a free 1898 Christmas Storyteller program at the Warren County History Center during the Lebanon Horse Drawn Carriage

Parade for over 20 years. Last year Mr. Zimkus provided a tall, black top hat as a donation bucket during his presentation—the proceeds of which went to benefit Warren County’s Interfaith Hospitality Network, a non-profit agency that helps homeless people get back on their feet. “People always seem to enjoy my stories,” said Mr. Zimkus, “And it was very gratifying to see how many also tossed a few dollars into my old top hat.”

The Warren County Historical Society is continuing to partner program this holiday season with these three charity partners, but this year is adding one more...The Historical Society, in conjunction with local community thespians, will produce Charles Dickens’ Christmas play, “A Christmas Carol,” performed as a 1930s live radio program December 9, 11, and 12 at the Warren County History Center in Lebanon. A dollar from each ticket sold will be donated to the Abuse & Rape Crisis Shelter of Warren County (ARCS).

# James Madison Burns, a Civil War Medal of Honor Recipient, and His Relationship to Lebanon, Ohio

by John J. Zimkus, Historian and Education Director of the Warren County Historical Society

“No Braver, truer, more honorable man ever donned a uniform.” That is how Col. Henry J. Johnson, adjutant of the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Volunteer Infantry once described James Madison Burns.

Burns was born on August 9, 1845 in Wells Township, Jefferson County, in eastern Ohio. Little is known about his family’s past. A newspaper article written almost 40 years after his birth stated his father, “now deceased, was a noted lawyer” in the Steubenville, Ohio area. That same article said that Burns had, at that time, two married sisters living in that area. Their first names were not given.

On October 31, 1861, during the first months of the Civil War, 16-year-old James enlisted in the Union Army as a member Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Infantry in Wellsburg, Brooke County, West Virginia. He was promoted to sergeant at age 18 on November 1, 1863. That following January, in 1864, he re-enlisted as a “veteran.”

On May 15, 1864, the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Infantry was involved in the Battle of New Market, Virginia. A large Confederate army, which included valiant young cadets from the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), forced Union Major General Franz Sigel and his army out of the Shenandoah Valley. During the course of the battle several VMI cadets lost their shoes in the mud while crossing a field near Bushong's orchard, which led to the field being called the “Field of Lost Shoes.”

Burns recalled, “Our army was defeated, and while falling back, the colors were in great danger of being captured.” He then rallied a few men to save the flag.

Col. Henry J. Johnson, adjutant of the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia, stated, “Burns bore the colors, amid a shower of bullets, to a place of safety within our reforming lines.” The eighteen-year-old sergeant Burns was wounded during this action. Despite these wounds, Johnson said Burns “went back between the contending lines and assisted off the field one of his comrades who had been stricken down badly wounded.”

Pvt. Travilla A. Russell remembered later, “In this part of the engagement I was severely wounded, and lying helpless on the field I called for aid.” Burns, “hearing my call returned in the face of a hot fire from the enemy and

assisted me from the field of battle and saved me from capture.” Sergeant Burn was said to have “received ringing cheers from the men of both armies who witnessed the brave deed.”

By the end of the Civil War, Burns had fought in 19 major battles including the Second Battle of Bull Run and 42 other engagements. He was discharged from the army on July 17, 1865.

On September 21, 1867, Burns re-enlisted again and, after applying for a regular commission, was appointed a second lieutenant in the 17th U.S. Infantry. He was first assigned to the Department of Texas, where he served from 1867 to 1869 on Indian campaigns in the northern Texas and Indian Territories against hostile Comanche and Kiowa Indians. After a short tour in Richmond Virginia, Burns was again stationed out West in 1870, this time at Fort Sully in the Dakota Territory.

On September 2, 1871, he was with General J. N. G. Whistler’s expedition from Fort Rice, Dakota Territory. They were to survey a proposed Northern Pacific Railway route to the Yellowstone River. The military escort consisted of 500 mounted men, a detachment of artillery with two Gatling guns, and 26 mounted Indian scouts with a train of 100 wagons.

In 1872, Burns was commander of an escort party for the chief engineers working on the Northern Pacific Railway from Fort Rice to the Badlands of the Missouri River. The party was caught in a blizzard, and the whole command was given up for lost. When they emerged from the ordeal, Chief Engineer Lindsey reported that it was the “exertions of Lt. Burns” that saved the entire party.

Burns continued to serve throughout the Indian Wars as an engineer, guide, and “protector of the men who were opening up the West.” He participated in expeditions to the Yellowstone and Muscle Shoals rivers during the summer of 1873 and was the engineer officer who built what would become Custer's Trail.

In the spring of 1876, he was the assistant quartermaster officer at Fort Abraham Lincoln in the Dakota Territory, supplying the troops of Gen. Alfred H. Terry and Lt. Col. George A. Custer during their campaigns in the Great Sioux War of 1876. The war’s most famous action was the Battle of the Little Bighorn, known to the



Lt. Col. James Madison Burns c.1896. His Medal of Honor is the one on the right.

Sioux as the Battle of the Greasy Grass and commonly referred to as Custer's Last Stand, which occurred on June 25-26, 1876.

After the famed Battle of the Little Bighorn, Comanche, the mount of the slain Army Captain Myles W. Keogh, was found in a ravine. Some sources say there was as many as twenty bullet wounds on the horse. His condition was said to be "serious."

Comanche was a "veteran" who had been with the 7th Cavalry since its organization in 1866. Back at Fort Lincoln, Dr. Charles A. Stein, the Veterinary Surgeon of the 7th Cavalry, extracted several of the bullets, and succeeded in cutting out, according to contemporary newspaper accounts, thirteen of them. The St. Paul (Minn.) *Pioneer Press* newspaper reported, "Dr. Stein speaks favorably of the assistance he received, in extracting the bullets, from Lt. [James M.] Burns, acting assistant quartermaster at Fort Lincoln."

At Fort Riley, Kansas, Comanche became the 7th Cavalry's regimental mascot, occasionally leading parades and indulging in a fondness for beer. Comanche died of colic on November 7, 1891. He was believed to be 29 years old at the time of his death. He was given a military funeral with full military honors. His remains, however, were preserved. He is now on display in the University of Kansas' Natural History Museum.

The 1880 U. S. Census had Lt. Burns living at Fort Yates near the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation in Boreman County, Dakota Territory.

On Tuesday, May 22, 1883, Lt. James Madison Burns, 37, married Caroline "Carrie" Corwin Sage, 26, granddaughter of the late Ohio Governor and U.S. Senator Thomas Corwin in Lebanon, Ohio. It was "the scene of a most brilliant and festive occasion, it being the consummation of 'Love's Young Dream' to a fair young maiden and a brave and gallant soldier," exclaimed the May 24, 1883 issue of *The Western Star* newspaper. "Society circles here and in Cincinnati have been in a state of impatient expectation for the day to arrive." How and when the "fair young maiden and [her] brave and gallant soldier" met is not known.

The wedding, which was describes as "truly . . . a scene of beauty," took place in the front of the large mirror in the spacious back parlor of the Corwin House at 210 W. Main Street in Lebanon. It was the same location of the marriage ceremony of Carrie's parents, Judge George R. Sage and Evalina Corwin Sage, on May 20, 1855; and of her

grandparents, Governor Tom Corwin and Sarah Ross Corwin, on November 13, 1822.

*The Western Star* at the time went into great detail to describe the wedding decorations and the bride's beautiful gown. "The old-fashioned, high, carved mantel, surmounted by a painted mirror, was banked with snow balls, relieved by scarlet geraniums and clusters of fragrant magnolias sent from Nashville to the bride. Over the blossoms hung the flag riddled by shot and shell, and bearing the names of many hard won battles that Lieut. Burns fought during the four years of the rebellion—winning a reputation for gallantry and soldierly conduct second to none."

"The bride wore an exquisite toilet [meaning dress or attire] of white satin and brocade; the petticoat of satin, with Greek drapery, edged with duchesse point; the train of brocade, edged with tiny pleating of satin. The pointed bodice was open, in V shape, filled in with tulle, overlaid with duchesse lace, in which sparkled a brooch, the groom's gift. The half-long sleeves had fills and epaulette of the lace. Down the left side of the train drifted exquisite sprays of Japan lilies, other slender leafage shaded from celadon to gold and a

cluster of the leaves were posed as shoulder knots. The tulle veil fell about her in misty folds. She held in her left hand an exquisitely painted fan, pearl-mounted, the gift of Mrs. Colonel Gilbert, of the Seventeenth Regiment, from which depended a handkerchief of filmy duchesse point, the gift of her brother, Lieutenant [Corwin] Sage."

Present at the ceremony were Capt. W. M. Van Horn and Lt. J. J. Connell of the "Seventeenth," at Fort Lincoln, Dakota Territory, and Capt. W. B. Pease, and Lt. W. S. Edgerly of Cincinnati. All, including Lt. Burns, with the exception of Capt. Pease, "appeared in their dress regimentals."

The Lebanon guest list included; U.S. Marshal Lot Wright and his wife Louisa Jurey Wright; Professor Alfred Holbrook; former Ohio Lt. Governor A. G. Burney and wife; Dr. Isaac Lincoln Drake and wife; General Durbin Ward and wife; and Josiah Morrow.

A list and detailed description of "101 presents" from all over the country was published in the newspaper. A large number of congratulatory telegrams were received. One from Memphis, Tennessee stated, "May Dakota blizzard be the only blizzard of your married life."

The couple remained at the old Corwin House until the following day, Wednesday, May 23, 1883, "when they left



James Madison Burns' Medal of Honor (left).  
The reverse side of James Madison Burns' Medal of Honor (right).  
Courtesy of the Virginia Military Institute.

Continued next page

on the noon train for Cincinnati and their new home in Dakota.”

How long Carrie stayed with James at his frontier post is not clear. From 1884 to 1886 Burns was a member of General D. S. Stanley’s staff at San Antonio, Texas. On November 2, 1885, James’ and Carrie’s first child, Evelyn Sage Burns, was born back in Lebanon, Ohio.

The April 5, 1888 issue of *The Lebanon Gazette* reported, “Mrs. Carrie S. Burns left Lebanon on Tuesday to join her husband, Lieut. Burns, at Cheyenne, Colorado. Miss Ella Clayton accompanied Mrs. Burns and will make a visit of some weeks.”

On March 26, 1889, their second child and first son, Corwin Sage Burns, was born at Fort Russell, Wyoming Territory. Their second son, James Madison Campbell Burns, was born in Lebanon, Ohio on November 16, 1890.

The January 22, 1891 issue of *The Lebanon Gazette* reported, “Captain J. W. Burns, former inspector of the Ohio national guard, is now stationed with his regiment, the seventeenth infantry, at Pine Ridge agency, and when last heard from was within six miles of the hostile Indians.”

Their third son and fourth child, Edward Mansfield Burns, was born in Columbus, Ohio on January 19, 1896.

On November 20, 1896, James Madison Burns, who had by this time recently achieved the rank of major, became the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his brave action at the Battle of New Market on May 15, 1864 some 32 years earlier during the Civil War. His citation read: “Under a heavy fire of musketry he rallied a few men to the support of the colors, in danger of capture and bore them to a place of safety. One of his comrades having been severely wounded in the effort, Sergeant Burns went back a hundred yards, in the face of the enemy's fire, and carried the wounded man from the field.”

Despite increasingly fragile health caused by his old wounds from the Civil War, Burns continued to serve his country and very nearly was sent to the Philippines during the Spanish-American War in 1898. He was still with the 17th Infantry when that regiment was ordered overseas. He, however, did not go. At the beginning of the Spanish-American War he instead assisted in organizing the Ohio troops.

In June 1898, he became the mustering officer for the state of West Virginia. Later Burns served as the chief mustering officer for the states of Arkansas and Kentucky. In January 1899, Burns was transferred to the 7th U. S. Infantry. On March 16, 1899, Burns retired from active military duty due to his “disability incurred in the line of duty” with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

From 1900 to 1907, he was an instructor of military tactics at West Virginia University and was living in Morgantown, West Virginia with his family. He then became an instructor for the West Virginia National Guard from 1907 to 1909.

In the fall of 1910, James Madison Burns and his family

moved to Lebanon, Ohio “that he might enjoy his declining years in the youthful environment of his companion,” his wife Carrie. They had recently purchased “the Clark property” in the Floraville Hill neighborhood south of downtown Lebanon. It was the former home of Common Pleas Court Judge Milton Clark at 232 S. Mechanic Street.

Burns had been “feeble” since moving to Lebanon and had an attack of bronchitis in mid-October 1910. “He began sinking Sunday [October 29] and as the evening shadows lengthened death released the earthly bonds of this hero of sixty battles,” *The Western Star* reported. Lt. Col. James Madison Burns died on Monday, October 30, 1910 at the age of 65.

Funeral services were held in the home of his wife’s nephew George Williams Cropper at 229 S. Broadway in Lebanon on Wednesday November 2, 1910 at 1:30 p.m. Rev. Arthur Cooper of the East Baptist Church was in charge of the services. Burial took place in the Corwin plot of the Lebanon Cemetery with full military honors. Company H of the Ohio National Guard escorted the body from the Cropper residence to the Lebanon Cemetery.

At the gravesite the local veteran’s organization, the Granville Thurston Post, No. 213, of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), conducted what was described as an “impressive service and as the body was lowered to its last resting place taps was sounded by bugles and a volley fired in true military style.” The headlines of November 3, 1910 issue of *The Western Star* proclaimed, “Gallant Warrior Answers Final Bugle Call of Heavenly Commander.”

(Lt. Col. James Madison Burns’ Medal of Honor is on display at Virginia Museum of the Civil War in New Market, Virginia. The museum is operated by the Virginia Military Institute [VMI]. It is located not far from where Burns performed his heroic deeds on May 15, 1864 in the Battle of New Market. The display is entitled “Medal of Honor Awarded to Sergeant James Burns.” After a brief four paragraph biography on Burns, it concludes with the statement, “The medal’s hanger and ribbon were lost at some time in the past. On loan from The Lannom Family.” How the medal left the possession of Burns family is not known.)



The grave site of Lt. Col. James Madison Burns, Lebanon Cemetery.

# The Cavalry Comes to Glendower

Our annual Civil War Encampment from the Ohio Valley Civil War Association took place Saturday and Sunday, September 26 & 27 at Glendower Historic Mansion. As always, the artillery corps brought their canon and fired it all weekend. Captain Roush kept large groups of people enthralled leading his troops in battlefield drills, demonstrating how to load and fire authentic Civil War rifles. New this year was Ray Schmidt and his brave horse who together demonstrated the work of a cavalry horse and soldier. Our own Rick Spencer led the Western Sharpshooter division. All this was made possible with the help of a crew of dedicated volunteers and our hard working site manager, Liz Grauwelman. Thanks to Cheri Brinkman, Mike Sheehy, Olivia Reed, Debbie DePaul, Karen Devanney, and Sue Watts for leading tours and manning the gift shop tent. Special thanks to WCHS Board member Joe Yurasek and his wife Debbie for sponsoring the event this year.

*(photos courtesy Deborah DePaul)*



# Service and Sacrifice: The Kidnapping of the General

*By: Mary Klei, Head Curator*

Part II (Continued from the August 2015 *Historicalog*)

Andrews' timetable required the Ohioans to meet in Chattanooga Thursday afternoon April 10, then travel south to Marietta, Georgia that evening. On Friday morning they would receive the remainder of their directions and take a train northward. The plan was to meet Mitchel's army on their arrival. Andrews instructed the men that starting out in Marietta, they would form one cohesive group "and either come through in a body or die together." Henceforth these men would go down in history as the "Andrews Raiders." They trusted Andrews as their leader, but wondered whether he had taken on more than he was capable of. As a man, he did inspire confidence, for he possessed a commanding presence, standing six feet tall and weighing some 180 pounds. His features were strong, with a direct, penetrating eye, while his voice carried a "firmness of tone" which contributed to his air of authority. Andrews projected the appearance of southern gentility: "His striking personal qualities added very much to his powers," Pittenger wrote. Adhering to the timetable was of vital importance. Burning the bridges would allow Mitchel to take Chattanooga Friday April 11. But he must not precede the raiders into Huntsville, for that would put much Confederate traffic on the rails, making it extremely difficult for the raiders to get through to him.

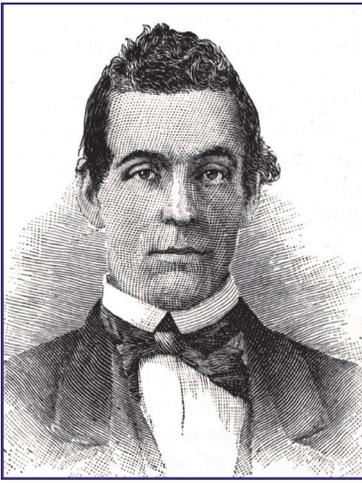
Andrews' planning and timing seemed foolproof, so carefully thought out---what could go wrong? The men had three days to travel the 200 miles to Marietta from Shelbyville, arriving Thursday night. Very early Friday morning April 11 the raiders were to seize the locomotive "General" at Big Shanty (today called Kennesaw) and drive it up the Western & Atlantic line past six stations through Tunnel Hill and past Ringgold to their destination, Chattanooga, which General U.S. Grant would later describe as "one of the wildest places you ever saw." On the way they would burn the bridges they had crossed over and cut telegraph wires, all of which would take about seven hours. In the meantime, Mitchel's march on Huntsville would deliver that city to him, and the raiders would meet him there. The men agreed: "This was glorious. The thought of such a coming into camp after piercing the heart of the Confederacy set every nerve on fire!" wrote Pittenger. Explanations completed, the meeting ended as a torrential downpour created unforeseen hazards and obstacles just as the men set out for Chattanooga. On foot, traveling in small groups separated from their fellows, the men slogged through deep, shoe-sucking mud bent on finding dry lodgings for the night. The heavy rain would continue for days. They could not know that, because of the rains and difficult travel, Andrews on Wednesday postponed the seizing of the train

from Friday until Saturday, April 12. In the meantime, General Mitchel captured Huntsville on the 11th as he had planned.

The three companions who struggled along with William Pittenger, 2nd OVI, were Perry G. Shadrach, 2nd OVI, Co. K, about 21, who enlisted in Knoxville, Ohio; William Campbell from Salineville, Ohio, civilian, age 22. George Davenport Wilson, 32, 2nd OVI, Co. B, was the third, and to quote Pittenger on this prominent figure in the mission, Wilson was "the most remarkable man of all who enlisted with Andrews." Pittenger described Wilson as "not highly educated...had spent many years as an itinerant journeyman shoemaker. He had traveled and observed much and forgotten nothing. In vigor and force of language I never knew a man who surpassed him. He delighted in argument on any topic---social, political, or religious---and was an adversary not to be [underestimated]....In the use of scathing and bitter language, in...unyielding dogmatism, in the power to bury an opponent under a flood of exhaustless abuse, he excelled. In coolness and bravery, in natural shrewdness and quickness of intellect, he was fully equal to Andrews; no danger could frighten him. His resources always rose with the demand, and on one memorable occasion he was carried to the very summit of moral heroism, and in the whole war no death was more sublime than his. Our friendship, which began on this first night, increased to the end, though we often engaged in heated discussion." As they made their way south Wilson warned his companions against overdoing their role-playing: "being better rebels than the rebels themselves," Pittenger recalled.

He described his friend: "Wilson was tall and spare, with high cheek-bones, overhanging brows, sharp gray eyes, thin brownish hair and long thin whiskers. The accompanying photo was taken ten years earlier." He declares that "Wilson excelled all the other members of the party in intellectual strength and acuteness...." George Wilson impressed Pittenger immediately as a natural leader.

George Davenport Wilson had been born in Belmont County, Ohio in 1830 to George and Elizabeth Clark Wilson. He married Martha Marple [Maple?] in 1849. They had two children : a son, David Davenport Wilson, born in 1852, and a daughter whose name and exact year of birth are unknown, and who died young in 1861 after her father's enlistment, according to available records. The senior Wilson, George's father, also died in 1861. In that same year of family tragedy, Martha and George Davenport Wilson were divorced on February 8. A November 1866 record from the Adjutant General's Office indicates that George enlisted in the Union army to serve



*George D. Wilson*

for three years at Franklin, Ohio on August 31, 1861. Following divorce and death in the family, it is possible that George looked upon his enlistment as a way to assuage the intense heart pain he must have felt during those difficult months. His most precious possessions, always carried with him, were a gold ring that had been a gift from Martha, and a pin which contained an ambrotype of her. He was mustered into Company B, 2nd OVI with

the rank of private and ordered to report for training at Camp Dennison, north of Milford, Ohio. The 2nd OVI was composed mainly of southern Ohio men. Company B was from Warren County and was under the command of General Ormsby Mitchel, according to historian Dallas Bogan.

Plodding through mud, braving swollen creeks, cold and wet to the skin in the unceasing rain, the small groups moved deeper into southern territory. Andrews had given the men money, which was usually refused by the simple folk from whom they sought food and lodging, for the raiders' Kentucky story was believed; their hosts thought themselves privileged "to do something for the gallant Kentuckians on their way to fight for the liberty of the South." Progress was slow, and by Thursday evening Wilson's group learned that Andrews had postponed the mission by a day, owing to the difficulty of travel in the constant rain. Andrews did not think Mitchel would carry out his march on Huntsville as planned, also due to the bad weather. This was a decided risk on Andrews' part, and an error in his judgment of Mitchel's determined character. Buell would have let the weather slow him down, but not Mitchel, who was ten miles north of Huntsville at the end of the third day. By 6 AM Friday April 11 Huntsville was in Union hands the raiders learned, "no shots fired."

As for Andrews' men, by Friday morning they had crossed the Tennessee River, the last remaining obstacle to their boarding a train together in Chattanooga at 5 PM for the 118 mile ride south to Marietta, Georgia, just north of Atlanta. In those days the average speed of the engines was 16-17 miles per hour over the hilly terrain and around tight curves; the trip would take seven hours, arrival time was around midnight. Marietta was the starting point of their mission Saturday morning. The men noted that, even though the South was at war, passports were not required. That would change after the mission the Ohioans were about to undertake.

It was very early morning, the 12th of April. One year ago on this day Fort Sumter was bombarded and the war had begun. After scarcely four hours' sleep at the hotel the raiders awoke, dressed hurriedly making sure to check their revolvers, immediately reporting to Andrews' room for a final briefing. Their number had unexpectedly decreased by two

who overslept and missed the train they were to take to Big Shanty, the breakfast stop. At Marietta the hotel where the group spent the night coincidentally was used as headquarters by an Ohio general of notorious fame, W.T. Sherman, who was leading his great army to Atlanta two years later, in 1864.

The secret operation was now underway and there was no turning back. Instructions were to seat themselves near to each other in the same car from Marietta to Big Shanty, where the train, pulled by the locomotive named the "General," would make a twenty minute stop for passengers and crew to eat breakfast at the trackside hotel. At that time the men were not to leave the train until Andrews gave the signal, and they were to look to him in the event of an unforeseen occurrence. Andrews and the engineers would man the locomotive and the raiders were to climb quickly into the third car behind the tender, which would remain with the engine; the rest would be uncoupled. Split-second timing was crucial; the slightest delay could mean disaster and death. Andrews had not told the men that the theft of this locomotive, the General, would be perpetrated near a large Confederate army encampment. The ranking Ohioan, a sergeant-major, now spoke, warning the others that Mitchel's taking of Huntsville surely had resulted in Confederate authorities on high alert, massive southward movement of Confederate rail traffic and mobilization of Southern troops. He felt certain the mission would fail and the lives of the entire group were at risk. Andrews would not waver; he vowed, "I will succeed or leave my bones in Dixie." He had even created a story about an "emergency ammunition train" rushing to Corinth, Mississippi to support Confederate General Beauregard, on the general's orders. This was to be their cover if the train they hijacked was stopped. No one would question Beauregard's orders, Andrews felt certain. Andrews' air of authority lent credence to his persuasive talk: he said the changed circumstances worked in their favor; with all the confusion, panic, and commotion on the line resulting from Huntsville falling to Mitchel, their stolen engine would be less likely to be spotted, if not completely overlooked. The very boldness of the deed assured its success, he added, because no one suspected it could be done. Yet in George Wilson's group the seeds of doubt had been planted by the sergeant-major. How could a fight with Confederates be avoided? They fervently hoped the twenty minutes allowed for breakfast in Big Shanty would be time enough to accomplish the deed. Fortunately Big Shanty had no telegraph. And still unknown to the raiders, the enemy soldiers in the Confederate camp would be sleeping. Reveille had not yet sounded.

Arriving at Big Shanty, the Ohioans were overcome with enthusiasm. The locomotive, tender, and boxcars now idled, ripe for the picking. The name "General" was lettered in gold on a plaque affixed to the engine's side. The engine was painted dark green with red-orange trim; the long boiler, a metallic silver, and the valves and domes on top were shiny brass. The number 39 was stenciled on the sand-box atop the boiler. A cowcatcher stuck out in front right under a large boxy oil lantern, and a huge funnel-shaped stack puffed steam and smoke. There were four five-foot diameter drivers

behind and four smaller wheels under the front of the boiler. The General was indeed an impressive engine of great power, to Andrews' raiders easily capable of outrunning any pursuers following in the wake of burning bridges, cut wires, and damaged track.

While everyone on the train was occupied with breakfast inside the Big Shanty station, now for only a few moments the train was unguarded. In seconds Andrews, two engineers, and the fireman had the engine, tender, and three boxcars uncoupled from the rest of the train and quickly boarded the General. The raiders sprang into the third boxcar. Not counting Andrews there were now nineteen Ohio soldiers: one man had missed a wakeup call earlier in the week, he did not take part in the raid; two others were captured en route and were forced to join the Confederate army, in accordance with the survival plan; two men failed to report at Marietta, presumably having overslept.

As luck would have it a Confederate guard was posted at the edge of the camp scarcely a dozen feet from the locomotive, and uncomprehending, saw the whole proceeding, but before he or anyone else could react, the General sped away.

Someone at breakfast happened to look out the window a minute later and shouted an alarm. Great uproar and confusion immediately arose; no one knew what to do. However, the conductor, whose duties in those days included responsibility for the engine, beyond merely collecting tickets, began to run after the General, as he was at a total loss to think of any other action to take. The first part of Andrews' plan, the actual kidnapping, was a success. Now would begin the destruction of telegraph communication, the tearing up of iron rails, and the burning of bridges along the 138 miles to Chattanooga. But, had Andrews stuck to the original schedule of Friday instead of letting the bad weather put the mission off a day, the men would have had an easier

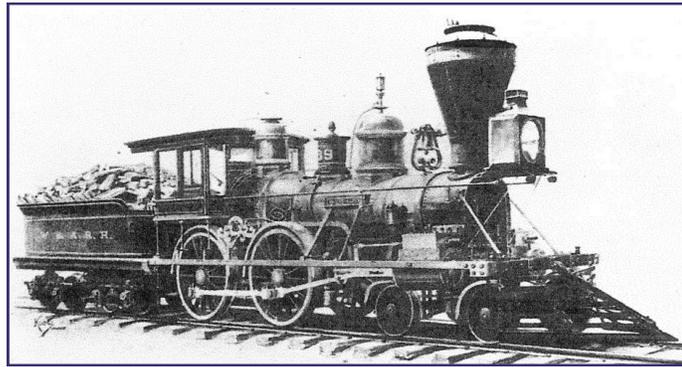
time of it. Now, on Saturday April 12, with Mitchel in Huntsville, the railroad was in disorder, "every train far behind time and two 'extras' were approaching, making each mile more hazardous for the raiders, as they were operating according to Friday's timetable." From time to time they stopped to cut wires, pry up lengths of iron rail and heave ties into the boxcars to be used in bridgeburning. At this initial stage of their mission the men experienced "wonderful exhilaration" as though success were a sure thing. Bonds writes, "George Wilson, the oldest and perhaps wisest of the party, put a stop to this. He too was pleased with the clean getaway thus far, but saw no reason to get carried away. 'Don't be so fast now,' he chided, ... 'we are not out of the woods yet.'" The words were hardly out of his mouth when the engine began to lose

steam and the train came to a halt. Spirits plummeted, worry and fear seized the raiders. Their luck held, however; merely closing a damper allowed the pirated General to get rolling again.

Thirty miles up the track unforeseen difficulties began. They had to wait for a local freight and pulled onto a side track. The freight carried a red flag, the signal that another train

was following. Andrews protested having to wait, forcefully telling his "ammunition for Beauregard" story. When the second train arrived, it too carried a red flag, further delaying the General. There were now three trains impeding their flight, over an hour waiting time, a critical and vulnerable position for the raiders. George Wilson and his fifteen fellows in the boxcar were forced to be completely silent: "So intolerable was our suspense that the order for a deadly conflict would have been felt as a relief." Finally they were able to be on their way again, but the hour's forced delay ultimately proved to be crucial...

TO BE CONTINUED in the April 2016 *Historicalog*



*The locomotive "General" c1862. Illustration by Wilbur G. Kurtz (Colonel James G. Bogle Collection).*

## Calling all Bakers!

**Get a jump on your holiday baking! Bake a batch of homemade from-scratch holiday cookies and share a dozen or two with us! Our Holiday Cookie sale, which will take place December 5, 2015, will benefit the Interfaith Hospitality Network as well as the WCHS. On this day, John Zimkus will be performing as Zachariah, 1898 Christmas Storyteller, at 11:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30 on the Village Green inside the Warren County History Center. December 5<sup>th</sup> is also the day of the Lebanon Horse Drawn Carriage Parade. To donate, please bring at least a dozen (or more!) homemade from-scratch Christmas cookies (sorry, NO cupcakes, brownies or other baked items) to the Warren County History Center by 4:00 PM on Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please do not individually wrap the cookies—we will portion them into specialty bags. Thank you for your support!**



# Folk Art Exhibit at The Warren County History Center

By Jeanne Doan, Exhibits Curator

In a quiet area of the Mote Gallery in the Warren County History Center, there is a tableau of nine paintings and two sculptures done by artists both known and unknown, trained and untrained. These unpretentious, lovingly-rendered pieces were constructed of materials that were close-at-hand for an audience that would appreciate each familiar element as well as the whole. These sweet little scenes of local life take us back to simpler times, and celebrate small town America. Art conservator Prof. Michael Coyan and local artists and teachers Gene and Rosemary Chute have gathered a wonderful and unassuming collection of folk art made right here in Warren County.

A bright red Golden Lamb, signed simply “Grace,” is imbued with a wonderful, childlike quality so easily lost in art; beside it we find an unsigned primitive mountain waterfall drawn in colored pencil on stamped Bristol paper, a scene we might find passing through the lush hills outside Lebanon. “The Old Brick Mill” gives us a frigid winter’s day, two water wheels working away, the creaking and splashing practically audible through the oil and canvas itself. The pen and ink drawing attributed to Mrs. Mildred. Blickensdorfer is a careful, impressive depiction of the Warren County History Center’s “Butterworth Cabin” replica.

On the table in our gallery, a painted “Sea Gull” wood sculpture charms on his whimsical perch; “A Porch Scene,” rendered painstakingly in charcoal, takes center stage, with two giddy children in their Sunday best and their freshly-washed dog. This unsigned piece takes us all back to the porches and pets of our childhoods.

“The Shaker Mill,” painted by an unknown artist, takes us to a millhouse in the snow—a man dragging firewood behind him is the only sign of life in this scene of hard times and hard work. The next piece is a pen-and-ink depiction of the Butterworth Homestead, with a special technique used to create the illusion of snowfall.

A charming molding frame connected by buttons surrounds a small, pleasing gouache on paper entitled, “Bridge to the Farm;” beside it, a 1938 oil on canvas by C. Fehrman gives us a peaceful summer’s day—a welcome respite from the hard winter milling—“Morrow Covered Bridge.”

“Corn Sculpture,” made from wood, tin and paint, is a handmade piece true to the essence of the folk art movement – simple, humble, familiar. “The Wagon Boy” is a painting by Will Corson using vibrant primary colors and an enchanting disregard for proportion. Our final painting was done by R.E. Turner in 1965. His fascinating rendition of the “First Golden Lamb” shows the hotel as it might have appeared when first built in 1803.



*The current art exhibit at the Warren County History center is Folk Art of Warren County.”*

This collection, curated by Michael, Rosemary, and Gene, celebrates what Folk Art is all about: scenes of life direct from the eyes of the artist, beautiful and admirable in their simplicity. Because a moment is quiet does not make it unimportant, as all good folk know who have listened to the mills creaking and the snow falling and the creeks flowing. Importantly, though, these pieces were made with a

great deal of love for their subjects, as well as a great deal of fun, and we as viewers, who know the sights and sounds of the pieces, who know the feel and smell of the materials, gain a newfound respect not only for that which lies outside our door, but for the people who saw it with new, unadulterated eyes: our friends, our neighbors, our family.

A heartfelt “Thank you!” goes out to Prof. Michael Coyan and Rosemary and Gene Chute for their thoughtful and generous work on the art collections of the Warren County Historical Society, Old Post Office, and Glendower Mansion. With their help we have an art gallery to be proud of and a museum to brag about. We here at WCHS wish them every happiness...and quiet, simple moments.

# Tidbits

## National Geographic Magazines Archive

National Geographic Magazine has been around since 1888. It's a wonderful resource for all kinds of well written and photographed articles about science, history and culture in general. Recently, WCHS member Steve Wilson stopped by the museum to offer us his collection of National Geographic Magazines dating from 1964 into the 2000's. Not only did Steve have all the magazines, he had the Master Index and all the maps. We accepted the donation thinking we'd cull out the magazines that pertained to some of our collections, like the Shakers, the fossils, the Native American artifacts. The rest we would sell at September flea market.

Staff with the aid of volunteers unpacked the magazines onto a couple of long tables and began looking through them with the aid of the index. After about a week it was evident that we were all really enjoying the National Geographic Magazines, all of them, not just the ones that had meaning for our museum collections. Certainly the articles and photographs are wonderful. But we really liked looking at the ads and remembering (or not) the

products that were advertised. We decided to keep them all and find space for them in our research library so our members and guests can visit and enjoy the magazines as well.



## WANTED: Scout Uniforms

The WCHS is actively seeking donations of historical Girl Scout, Boy Scout, Cub Scout, and Brownie uniforms and gear from Warren County. Additionally, any badges, patches, etc. from other clubs such as 4H would be gratefully appreciated as well.

The following article was originally printed in the *Cincinnati Whig* newspaper and was reprinted in *The Western Star* on December 4, 1835.

### Cincinnati Execution

John W. Cowan, the cruel murderer of his wife and two children, was hung yesterday, (in a field west of the city, near Millcreek,) agreeably to his sentence. He was swung from the scaffold at a quarter past one o'clock, and after struggling for *five minutes*, died. An immense concourse of people, probably amounting to upwards of *twenty thousand*, were congregated to witness the execution. Disgraceful as it may appear, perhaps one fourth of the number were females, many of whom had come from the country a distance of 20 or 30 miles.

Cowan was taken to the gallows, sitting upon his coffin on a cart. He addressed the multitude twice while on the scaffold, but we have not heard what he said. He endeavored to appear very firm and collected, but at the moment of execution was much agitated, and repeatedly clapped his hands in agony.

When shall we get rid of these loathsome exhibitions? The scenes of yesterday, it seems to us, must have convinced every body who witnessed them, that executions should always be made privately.

## Volunteer Fine Arts Curators Sought

The Warren County History Center was blessed to have had some very talented volunteer artists working with our collection this past year. Fine Arts instructor Michal Coyan and artists Rosemary and Gene Chute cleaned and researched dozens of paintings from the collection and mounted several wonderful exhibits. Unfortunately, they have retired from volunteering with us. For that reason we are seeking artists and art historians to join our ranks as volunteer art preservationists and curators. The work entails researching and mounting exhibits from our collection and from other artists and collections, photographing and cataloging works in our collection and working with professional art preservationists on the museum's behalf. If interested, give the office a call at 513-932-1817.

# Free Family-Friendly Concert

"Christmas in Warren County"



In it's 11th year, this concert is an evening of Christmas music, both instrumental and vocal, presented by children and adults.

It is in the "festival" tradition, as seen in films like "The Sound of Music," with local participants and carol singing.

Managed by WCHS member and volunteer Cheri Brinkman.

DECEMBER 6, 2016  
7:00 PM

MASON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
6315 S. MASON- MONTGOMERY  
RD, MASON 45040

FREE ADMISSION ♦ FREE PARKING

## WCHS' Annual Dinner & Appeal with Wes Cowan

The Warren County Historical is thrilled to host famed historian and Americana expert Wes Cowan as the featured speaker at its annual Membership Dinner and Donation Appeal on Wednesday, December 2, 2015. Doors will open at 5:30 PM. Keep an eye on your mailbox for your invitation, which will arrive in November.

Mr. Cowan is the owner of Cowan's Auctions in Cincinnati, Ohio and is known for his starring role on PBS' "History Detectives" and as the Americana expert on "Antiques Roadshow." Mr. Cowan's talk will include his reflections on the individual's connection to history.

This is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Warren County Historical Society's annual dinner and donation appeal and is open only to members of the Warren County Historical Society. The evening includes a buffet dinner by McCoy Catering, silent auction and brief business review.

For our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year we are also honoring the Cowan/Brant family and most particularly our long-time volunteer Martha Brant who passed away this spring. Marty, as she was known, was our membership secretary for many years and also worked in our curatorial department. Her father, Carl Cowan (no relation to Wes), built the shops on the Village Green.

Please mark you calendar for this special evening!

# ENTER TO WIN! American Girl® DOLL



## MARY ELLEN

RAFFLE TICKETS \$1.00 EACH OR 6 FOR \$5.00

PURCHASE AT

THE WARREN COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

Drawing held at the Annual Dinner December 2, 2015



Stop by to see her, decked out in her cool 1950s style, at the Rocking Horse Gift Shop in the Warren County History Center.

# SPONSORSHIPS NEEDED

Warren County Historical Society's 2015 Holiday Events  
 Each event benefits the WCHS and a local charity in the Warren County community.

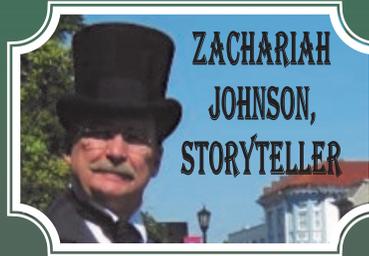
Open to all  
 Ages!  
 Enter Your  
 Gingerbread  
 House by  
 November  
 24!



Houses on  
 Display  
 through  
 December

**Gingerbread House Display & Contest**  
 To Benefit Big Brothers & Big Sisters

Free  
 Event



ZACHARIAH  
 JOHNSON,  
 STORYTELLER

Holiday  
 Cookie  
 Sale

DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup> ♦ DURING THE PARADE

Donations Benefit Interfaith Hospitality Network

Open  
 Every  
 Fri-Sun in  
 Dec.  
 (except 25)



Guided Tours  
 ♦  
 Decorated by  
 Professional  
 Designers

*Christmas at Glendower*

To Benefit Warren County Community Services

Lunch  
 &  
 Learn  
 Dec. 9—  
 Reserve Now!

Weekend  
 Shows  
 Dec.  
 11 & 12

*A Christmas  
 Carol*



Brought  
 to life in  
 1930s  
 radio  
 show  
 style

To Benefit the Abuse & Rape Crisis Shelter of WC

[glendower.org](http://glendower.org) ♦ [wchsmuseum.org](http://wchsmuseum.org) ♦ 513-932-1817

*Dated Material, Please Open*

The History Center will be  
 closed December 24, 25, 31  
 and January 1. It will reopen  
 January 2, 2016.  
 Glendower will be open  
 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. every Friday,  
 Saturday, and Sunday (except  
 Christmas Day) in December  
 through December 27.

HOLIDAY NOTE



Warren County History Center  
 105 S. Broadway  
 Lebanon, OH 45036

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