

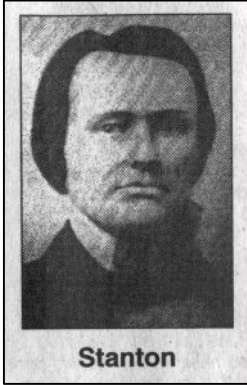
## COL. SIDNEY SMITH STANTON

By W. Calvin Dickinson

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The Stanton family was among the early settlers of the Upper Cumberland region.



Champion Stanton and his wife Sallie “Sarah” Lindsey Stanton, both born in the 1780s in Virginia, settled in Jackson County in the 1820s. His wife gave birth to 11 children, seven boys and four girls. The ninth child, Sidney Smith Stanton, was the most accomplished of the siblings, but his promising career was to be terminated by the Civil War. Sidney was born in Jackson County in 1829, and he attended school there, maybe Gainesboro. There is also speculation that he studied law in Lebanon. Although no personal letters of Stanton have come to this author, his military letters and reports in the Official Records indicate a highly literate person.

Sidney married Martha Apple about 1857 and began practicing law in Carthage, moving back to Jackson County and hanging out his shingle in Gainesboro. In 1859 he won a seat in the Tennessee Senate, representing Jackson, Macon and White counties. One early author claimed that “his fame as a brilliant and logical orator had spread throughout the upper Cumberland district, and before he was lionized.”

By 1860 Gov. Isham Harris was leader of a vocal minority in the state that advocated secession. Sen. Stanton adamantly opposed the idea. He and other former Whigs formed the Constitutional Union Party under the leadership of John Bell.

On April 25, 1861, after the battle at Fort Sumter, Harris called a special session of the legislature. The mood in middle Tennessee had changed drastically because of the battle, and the lawmakers actions reflected that bellicose sentiment.

Stanton was now in sympathy with secession, and in the 1861 legislature he led in efforts to organize Tennessee as part of the Confederacy. The legislature presented Stanton with an engraved gold-headed cane in appreciation for his leadership in the body. Lt. Col. R. C. Sanders later said of his friend: “His prospects for success as a lawyer and a politician at the breaking out of the war were of the most flattering character.”

In July Stanton returned to the Upper Cumberland to pursue the Confederate cause in the military. At Livingston he enlisted as a private in Company F, 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry. He recruited several companies of men from Putnam, Jackson, Overton, and White counties, totaling about 1,100 “large, brave and stalwart men. In August the regiment elected Stanton colonel instead of George Dibrell. Dibrell was elected lieutenant colonel.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment left Tennessee for Kentucky in October, moving along the sate border toward Camp beech Grove near Mill Springs and Fishing Creek. Stanton’s 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Gen. Zollicoffer’s brigade was in the first line of attack in a three-hour battle at Mill Springs. By 10 0’clock the entire CSA line had collapsed, falling back to Camp Beech Grove, then crossing the river and abandoning cannon, animals, food supplies and wounded men. In addition to his wounded arm, Stanton’s 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment had suffered 55 casualties. We do not know the emotional reaction of Sidney Stanton to this catastrophe, but the losses must have weighed heavy upon him.

In December 1862 he went to McMinnville in Warren County to organize a new regiment, the 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee infantry. Men from Smith, Warren, DeKalb, Overton and Putnam counties made up the unit.

With very little training the 84<sup>th</sup> joined the Army of Tennessee on Dec. 29 assigned to Brig. Gen D. S. Donelson’s Brigade. Within the next 12 hours the battle of Murfreesboro (Stone’s River) began. At one

critical point in the battle Confederate troops were driven behind Stanton's regiment and began reforming. Upon receiving orders Stanton moved forward to protect these units. He advanced some 500 yards to a bend of the Stones River and halted on a bluff. Col. Savage's regiment and the 12<sup>th</sup> Tennessee joined him, and they waited for orders. Stanton's report indicated that his regiment "showed marked coolness and courage all the while, as they were under heavy shelling for a great portion of three days, and showed no fear or excitement. They kept good order and never scattered."

After the battle of Stones River, the CSA War Department ruled that the 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment had been illegally organized, and on March 8, 1863, the unit was consolidated with the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Regiment; Stanton was elected colonel of the consolidated 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment. Soldiers of the 28<sup>th</sup> were men from Cumberland, Overton, Putnam, Wilson, Jackson, Smith and White counties.

In the summer of 1863 the regiment moved to Chattanooga with Gen. Bragg's army. By Sept. 18, Gen. Rosecrans had concentrated his Federal army on Chickamauga Creek south of Chattanooga. The Federals had about 58,000 troops positioned against about 66,000 Confederates.

On the 19<sup>th</sup>, Bragg attacked. Stanton's regiment crossed Chickamauga Creek in the morning, and by noon were attacking the breastworks of the enemy.

"My brave boys fired promptly at the command and moved forward a few paces, when they were ordered to fire and load lying down." After an hour the regiment retreated about 50 yards, then moved forward again. Observing that the Federals were moving on the left flank, the 28<sup>th</sup> received, orders to counter this advance. "By this last movement the men were more fully exposed to the deadly fire of the enemy, and we were ordered to retire." When the 28<sup>th</sup> wavered and began its first retreat, Stanton "rushed to the front on horseback, seized the standard of the colors, and bearing them to the front, shouted for his men to follow, which they did in the most gallant manner, regaining the ground they had lost." Stanton's flag was "riddled with ball," pierced more than 30 times. As a result of the battle report, Stanton was cited for unusual bravery by Gen. Cheatham.

The Army of Tennessee now began its long and bloody retreat toward Atlanta. The hurried, chaotic nature of the movement was indicated by the fact that Stanton was four months late writing his report on the battle of Missionary Ridge. The regiment wintered in Dalton, Ga., although it journeyed to Demopolis, Ala., and Atlanta during that period.

Resaca was the first battle of Gen. Sherman's Atlanta campaign, and it was the last battle for Col. Stanton. Stanton's regiment was evidently in the heat of the battle. Capt. W. L. Woods was wounded, a ball entering his mouth and shattering one side of his jawbone. A ball entered below the right ear of Lt. Rogers and exited near his left eye. Both men lived to fight again Stanton was not so lucky. He was standing on a log directing a line of skirmishers when a piece of shell struck his head. He died on May 14, 1864, probably quickly. His burial place is unknown, although the General Assembly Directory lists the cemetery at "Colhoune" (Calhoun) as the site. Lt. George Dillon of the 18<sup>th</sup> Regiment noted that Stanton's death was mourned by the entire army. Another Lieutenant commented: "It was a sad and depressing sight to see this good man and gallant soldier drop to his death." About 450 other Confederates died in the battle.

During his long career in the Confederate military Stanton fought in six major battles. He was always cited for bravery, never for cowardice or indecisiveness. Fourteen officers signed a commendation for bravery on the battlefield at Chickamauga. He was respected by the men in his commands, as he was by his peers in the officer corps. Stanton served in three regiments, and he was elected commanding colonel in each of them. He must have possessed a strong personality and leadership qualities that inspired confidence.

Eulogies lamented both loss of Stanton as a soldier and a statesman. His service was lauded both on the battlefield and in the statehouse. It was thought that he would be governor of Tennessee after the war.

Stanton's friend, Lt. Col. R. C. Sanders, wrote of his comrade:

“Col. Sidney Smith Stanton was a man of talent and genius not surpassed by any man in the state... He possessed every quality of mind and soul necessary to endear him to the people – warmhearted and generous to a fault.”

*A longer version of this essay will be included in “Sister States, Enemy States: Kentucky and Tennessee in the Civil War.” Edited by Kent Dollar, Larry Whiteaker and Calvin Dickinson, this book will be published in 2009.*



**DAUGHTERS OF CONFEDERACY ATTEND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE**

**COOKEVILLE** – Several local women of Captain Sally Tompkins No. 2123, United Daughters of the Confederacy attended the Civil War Roundtable which was lead by Dr. Calvin Dickinson, history professor emeritus at Tennessee Tech University. Dickinson spoke on “Cumberland Confederate: Colonel Sidney Smith Stanton,” a subject on which he has written in the book “Sister States, Enemy States: Kentucky and Tennessee in the Civil War,” edited by Kent Dollar, Calvin Dickinson and Larry Whiteaker. Those who attended learned about Col. Sidney Stanton, who was born in Jackson County in 1829. By 1859, he won a seat on the Tennessee State senate representing Jackson, Macon and White counties. After secession, the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment was organized and he was elected colonel. Shortly after, he went down to McMinnville to organize a new regiment: the 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment, made up of men from Smith, Warren, DeKalb, Overton and Putanm. Stanton later died on the Chickamauga battlefield, and 14 officers signed a commendation for bravery. The ladies of the UDC met a descendent of Col. Stanton, who was also in attendance to hear the lecture on his ancestor.

For more information on joining the Untied Daughters of the Confederacy, call Martha Sue Broyles at 738-5869.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: Wednesday, 25 March 2009, pg. 8.

**Source:** *Bicentennial Echoes of the History of Overton County Tennessee* by Robert L. and Mary Eldridge, pg. 64: Colonel Sydney S. Stanton was born and reared in the Tenth District of Putnam County. He obtained a good education, studied law and was admitted to the bar and located at Carthage where he practiced law until the outbreak of the Civil War. He volunteered for service in the Southern cause and was soon promoted to the rank of colonel and was respected as an able and fearless officer.

Colonel Stanton was sent to Camp Zollicoffer in Overton County in July of 1861, where he organized the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment, composed of seven or eight companies of soldiers. A few days later this regiment went into training at Fort Myers near Monroe, where it was inducted into military service.

At Fort Myers the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment was joined by the 29<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment which was under Colonel John P. Murray and two cavalry companies, under Captain A. C. Saunders and Captain W. S. Bledsoe. The Regiment remained at Fort Myers until October 1, 1861, when it marched to Mill Springs, KY, where Colonel Stanton was wounded in battle and General Felix K. Zollicoffer was killed.

Colonel Stanton resigned after the battle of Shiloh, and later organized the 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment near McMinnville, in December 1862. He was killed in battle near Resecca, GA in May 1864.

**Source:** *Heritage of Putnam County Tennessee – 2008* by Putnam County Heritage Book Committee and County Heritage Inc.

**SIDNEY S. STANTON (#1084)** By Dale Welch – *Hilltop Express* Newspaper, Monterey, TN

Pgs. 364 & 365 – Although his name is not a household word today, it is said that in the years following the Civil War, when Tennessee veterans of the Army of the Confederacy gathered for reunions, the mere mention of “Sidney Smith Stanton” was enough to cause hats to be removed and tears shed.

Stanton, elected as colonel of the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry of the Confederate States of American and later of the 84<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Consolidated Infantries, as revered by his mean as a hero.

Born about 1833 in the 10<sup>th</sup> District of what is now Putnam County but then Jackson County, Stanton had a passion for the study of law. Years before Putnam County and Cookeville were formed; he studied long and hard and was admitted to the bar at Carthage in Smith County, TN.

Stanton was elected as a member of the House in the Tennessee General Assembly for the 1857-59 term, a member of the American or “Know-nothing” Party. After completing his term in the house, he served from 1859 until Tennessee seceded from the Union in 1861, representing Jackson, Macon and White counties.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, he volunteered at Camp Zollicoffer, near Livingston, as a private in the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry. A few days later at its organization, he became colonel.

After drilling for about three months, Col. Stanton received orders for the regiment’s first march and march they did, mostly in the rain and mud. From Camp Myers they trod to Livingston then to the Cumberland River, crossing it at Bennett’s Ferry, and on to Tompkinsville, KY. While there they burned two camps built for Home Guards and removed to Red Boiling Springs, TN.

From there, the regiment went back to Tompkinsville and on to Burkesville, KY, crossing then into Celina, TN. Criss-crossing back and forth between Kentucky and Tennessee, the regiment reached Camp Beech Grove in Kentucky. There they were placed under the command of Brigadier Gen. Felix Zollicoffer and helped in fortifying the encampment with earth works.

After reinforcements arrived, the whole left camp about midnight on Jan. 18, `862, to attack Federal Gen. Thomas.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry was in the first column of attack. The Union Army was driven from their line. Col. Stanton, while in the advance of this command, received a severe wound in the arm. But he continued his charge until Gen. Zollicoffer was killed.

Zollicoffer had ridden over to give some instruction to what he thought were some of his forces, but they turned out to be Federals. With Gen. Zollicoffer dead and other complications occurring, the command was driven back by the Federal forces who turned out to be five times the number of the Confederates.

During the Battle of Shiloh, the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry was detailed to guard the railroad leading up the Tennessee River from Corinth, MS, against a threatened attack by Federal forces crossing the river above Pittsburg Landing.

After Shiloh, Stanton and Sanders returned to Tennessee and formed a new regiment called the Tennessee Infantry. They reported to the army at Murfreesboro only three days after its organization and only 12 hours before the Battle of Murfreesboro was to begin.

After the Battle of Murfreesboro, the command fell back to Ulahorn and the 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee was consolidated with the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Regiment with Stanton elected as colonel and Sanders appointed as quartermaster.

On Sept. 19-20, 1863, the regiment was engaged in one of the hottest battles of the war, the battle of Chickamauga. The regiment was engaged in the roughest of the fighting and was in the charge that captured the last works of the enemy on that occasion.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee lost 230 men among the killed and wounded. During the engagement, the Federals discovered that the Confederates were not supported on their left and started a flanking movement.

To stop this movement, the brigade was ordered to move by the left flank under a very heavy fire from the front and flank. Men of the shocked 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee regiment began falling out left and right. Col. Stanton rode quickly up to the Color Sergeant and grabbed hold of the flag staff, crying out: "Boys, remember we are Tennesseans! Follow me!"

The fleeing men turned and followed Stanton for 75 yards where they were ordered to lie down and fire. The enemy were moved from their positions. During the time Col. Stanton had held the flag staff, 30 minnie ball holes were fired through the flag.

But Stanton was untouched. In his official report of the battle he never mentioned the incident. Only a separate report by fellow officers told the event.

After Chickamauga, the regiment was ordered to Charleston, TN, to guard and protect the Hiwassee bridge where they remained until the battle around Missionary Ridge began. Continuing on through Georgia, the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Consolidated was involved in the Battle of Resaca. On May 14, 1864, Col. Sidney Smith Stanton was fatally wounded as he stood on a log giving orders to a lieutenant.

Lt. Col. R. C. Sanders said of his fallen friend: "If he had a fault as a military man, he was too brave to care for his personal safety, he was too kind-hearted to impose discipline upon his inferior officers and privates. A more brilliant intellect, a more captivating orator, a more warm-hearted and genial gentleman, a closer and more solid friend, a more gallant and chivalrous soldier sleeps not among the Confederate dead."

It is believed that Col. Stanton is buried with his men in the Resaca, GA, Confederate Cemetery near the battlefield site.

## GRANVILLE, TN UNVEILS CIVIL WAR TRAIL MARKERS.

**GRANVILLE** – The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development is currently developing Civil War Trails for Tennessee which is part of a multi-state program that identifies, interprets and creates driving tours of both the great campaigns and the lesser-known Civil War sites.



Noell Rembert, Civil War heritage from the Department of Tourist Development, was present for the dedication and stated that there are now 108 Civil War Trail sites in Tennessee with a goal of having 300 by 2012. A statewide map guide will be available in December of this year so driving tours can begin in Tennessee.

(Pictured: The families of Col. Sidney S. Stanton and Sgt. Thomas Jefferson Lee unveil the Civil War Trail marker titled “The Civil War in Granville” at Granville Museum as part of the Granville Fall Celebration. Pictured are Annessa Wright, Joe Huddleston, James Lee Wright, Bonnie Stanton Moody, Pam Stanton Copenhaver, Jolene Stanton Niblack, Julia Wiggins, Sidney S. Stanton III and Garland Stanton).

The Granville marker titled “The Civil War In Granville” states Granville was a contested area for both Confederate and Union cavalries from 1863-1865.

In the spring and summer of 1863, the 8<sup>th</sup> Texas Cavalry (SCA) was stationed in Granville while preparing to attack Union-occupied Carthage. In the fall of 1864, the 1<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Mounted Infantry (USA) used Granville as a base and also camped across the Cumberland River from Granville. The marker honors Granville resident Col. Sidney Stanton, a prominent Granville attorney and state senator at age 30 who strongly encouraged secession. He enlisted as a private in Co. F, 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry (CSA), in July 1861.

Stanton recruited more than 1,000 men from neighboring counties.

Promoted to colonel, he organized the 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry in 1862.

After surviving several battles, Stanton was killed during the Atlanta Campaign.

The marker also honors Sgt. Thomas Jefferson Lee, Co. K, 17<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry (CSA), who was captured in Granville while recruiting volunteers in his hometown. Lee was one of a group of Confederate soldiers pardoned by President Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1865, just one day before the president’s death. Lee later returned to Granville to marry Col. Stanton’s relative, Tennessee Stanton, whom he had promised to marry when she was just a baby.

On Oct. 24, 1885, 5,000 Confederate veterans reunited at Granville to pay tribute to Col. Stanton’s memory. Thomas J. Lee’s Co. K, 17<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry, held reunions in Granville with both Confederate and union veterans from 1885 to 1920.

“We are honored to have this marker in Granville and to be part of the great Civil War Trail,” said Randall Clemons, president of Granville Museum.

“Both of these men deserve honoring as well as many other men of Granville that served. Granville will hold a special event in October 2010 to memorialize the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oct. 24, 1885, grand event. Granville Museum is in process of completing a special exhibit in the museum on Stanton and Lee.”

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: Monday, 26 October 2009, pg. 7.

<http://www.ajlambert.com>