

Masons Stand Fast And Firm
By Clarence E. Stefl, Past District Education Officer

During the early months 1874, in the little village of Wellsville, Columbiana County, Eastern Ohio, on the banks of the Ohio River, trouble was brewing.

The population of approximately 2,100 citizens was being aroused by Anti-Masons, with ministers of the gospel disclaiming Masonry from the pulpit, in addition to itinerant humbugs who were trying to rally the populace against the Masons. It was said that Wellsville did not need Masonry.

The Brethren of Wellsville Lodge No. 180 became aware of this movement and very quietly prepared for the so-called day of reckoning.

Worshipful Master S. L. Fisher sent word to Most Worshipful Brother Asa H. Battin, Grand Master, apprising him of the impending day.

This information was then communicated to adjacent Lodges and neighboring states. The results, which Most Worshipful Brother Battin noted at Grand Lodge on October 20, 1874, far exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

Lodges present were New Lisbon No. 65, East Liverpool Riddle No. 315, Jenkins No. 471, Salineville No. 348, Sandy Valley No. 408, Minerva No. 551, Steubenville No. 45, Bridgeport No. 181, Martins Ferry Ohio City No. 486, and Waynesburg.

From Pennsylvania came Masons from Beaver, Pittsburgh, Smith Ferry, Allegheny, Rochester, and New Brighton. Wheeling, New Cumberland, and Wellsburg Lodges of West Virginia were also present.

In all, on June 24, 1874, over 8,000 Masons were present, the finest procession the Grand Master had ever witnessed, outnumbering the residents four to one. He said that, since that day, not the sound of an Anti-Mason has been heard in Wellsville or the region round about.

Brethren, these Masons traveled on trains, boats, stage coach, horses, and buggies to defend Masonry. We should be proud of them and our heritage.