



Clement L. Vallandigham

Topic Guide for Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>)

Introduction

Clement L. Vallandigham (1820-1871) was a 19th century Ohio newspaper editor, attorney and politician active during the mid-19th century. Known for his role as head of the Democratic Party Copperheads, he vehemently opposed the American Civil War, supporting states' rights and the institution of slavery. In May 1863, he was arrested for violating [General Order Number 38](#) during a speech delivered at Mt. Vernon, Ohio, in which he stated the war was about freeing slaves, not preserving the Union, and called the President "King Lincoln." His arrest, trial and deportation to the Confederacy led to a public outcry amongst some groups in the Union. Vallandigham returned to Ohio in 1864, continuing his involvement in politics but was never again elected to public office. He resumed his law practice, and, in 1871, he died after accidentally shooting himself during a trial.

Important Dates

- July 19, 1820: Clement Laird Vallandigham is born in New-Lisbon (now Lisbon), Ohio.
- 1845-1846: Vallandigham represents Columbiana County district in Ohio House of Representatives.
- 1847-1849: Vallandigham serves as editor for the Dayton *Weekly Empire*, a Democratic newspaper.
- 1858-1863: Vallandigham represents Ohio's 3rd District in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- May 1, 1863: Vallandigham delivers major speech in Mount Vernon, Ohio, criticizing President Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War and expressing sympathy for the Confederacy.
- May 5, 1863: Vallandigham is arrested for violating General Order Number 38.
- May 6-7, 1863: Vallandigham is tried by a military court.
- May 19, 1863: President Lincoln orders Vallandigham deported to the Confederacy where he is put under guard by President Jefferson Davis because he is considered to be an "alien enemy."
- 1864: Vallandigham illegally returns to Ohio.
- 1871: Vallandigham advocates for the "New Departure" policy over Republican Reconstruction.
- June 17, 1871: Vallandigham dies of an accidentally self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Suggested Search Strategies

- Try combining "Vallandigham" with the following terms as an "all" word search, proximity or phrases: Clement, Copperhead, New Departure, death, trial, arrest, Mount Vernon, speech, elect, Democrat.
- Limit your search by date to find information about specific events.
- Look for results in both Republican and Democratic newspapers to see differing political viewpoints.

Sample Articles from Chronicling America

- ["Third Congressional District"](#) *Fremont Journal* (Fremont, OH), November 7, 1856, Image 2, col. 2.
- ["The Court-Martial..."](#) *Holmes County Farmer* (Millersburg, OH), May 28, 1863, Image 1.
- ["Vallandigham! Record of the Traitor"](#) *Cleveland Morning Leader* (Cleveland, OH), October 5, 1863, Image 2.
- ["Vallandigham's New Departure"](#) *Daily State Journal* (Alexandria, VA), May 31, 1871, Image 2, col. 1.
- ["Death of Mr. Vallandigham"](#) *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), June 22, 1871, Image 2, col. 1.
- ["Only Public Man Banished by President Lincoln"](#) *The Sun* (New York, NY), April 6, 1913, Image 34.