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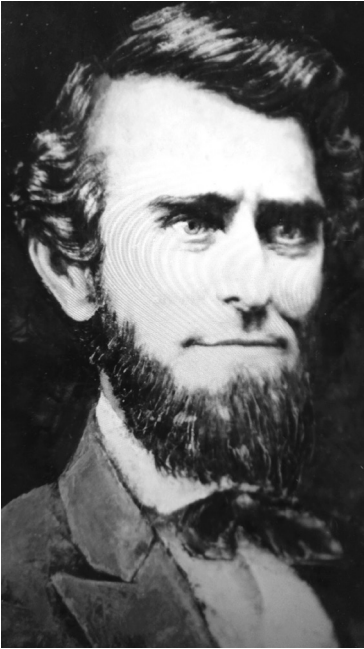
## To “whiten” the Mountains: Abolishing Slavery in West(ern) Virginia, 1861–1863

*Adam Zucconi*

*(A note from the editors: Readers will find some of the language in this article offensive, but the quotations wherein such language appears are historically accurate and are used to reflect concepts of race and color prevalent in western Virginia/West Virginia during the Civil War era.)*

On June 20, 1863, West Virginia entered the Union as a slave state. In his inaugural address as the state’s first governor, Republican Arthur Ingraham Boreman characterized the Mountain State’s creation as a manifestation of the intrastate sectional tension that had threatened to dismember Virginia multiple times over the preceding years. Eastern Virginians had “always” considered the trans-Allegheny an “outside appendage” or “territory,” Boreman insisted, as constitutional, political, and economic structures favored eastern Virginians at the expense of their transmontane neighbors. Empowered by the “original Constitution of the State,” eastern Virginians had “collected heavy taxes from us” to construct “railroads and canals in the East” while they “withheld appropriations from the West.” West Virginia’s “natural channels” meant that “[o]ur markets, our trade[,] and our travel” occurred with northern and western states, generating “little intercourse” between eastern and western Virginians. Differences in “nature, our commerce, travel, habits, associations, and interests” coupled with eastern Virginians’ support for the “fatal doctrine of secession” strengthened Boreman’s interpretation that “two peoples” occupied the same state, making the Old Dominion’s dismemberment inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

Boreman’s memory of Virginia’s sectional history reflected the difficulty of leading a state still grappling with the issue of slavery. While Boreman’s inaugural address suggested that West Virginians chose the Union over slavery as evidenced by residents’ adoption of a gradual emancipation clause, conditions on the ground failed to match that lofty idealism. Northwest Republicans had emerged as vocal supporters of abolishing slavery to save the Union and to hasten West Virginia’s creation. “Shall we object that slavery is destroyed . . . if the Union is thereby saved,” Boreman questioned.<sup>2</sup> Republicans, aided by the presence of federal



Arthur Ingraham Boreman  
(source: West Virginia Department  
of Arts, Culture, and History)

troops and their close identification with the statehood movement, stressed that slavery's abolition in western Virginia would liberate white residents from the political slavery imposed by eastern slaveholders.<sup>3</sup>

Republicans' eagerness to abolish slavery encountered intense opposition. Conservative northwesterners—some who expressed varying degrees of support for statehood while others outright opposed it—worried about the broadening scope of war, notably Republicans' supposed flagrant dismissal and denigration of civil liberties and constitutional guarantees. “[W]aging . . . a war for the abolishment of slavery in the southern States is in open violation of the Constitution,” the *Clarksburg Patriot* insisted.<sup>4</sup> A war to save the Union had evolved into a war to destroy slavery, a development that unconditional unionists before the war had not sanctioned and now

strongly opposed. John S. Carlile maintained this position, arguing that directions from congressional Republicans to create a free state amounted to congressional dictation and political submission, not liberation.<sup>5</sup>

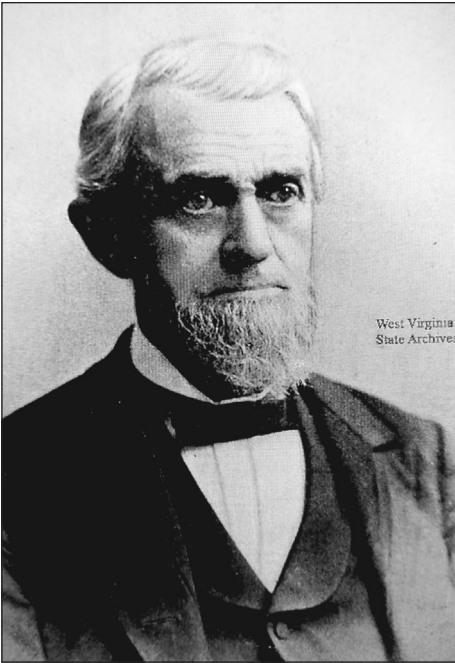
West Virginians' conflicted thoughts on slavery reflected the messy divorce of slavery and democratic politics. Since the war's beginnings, residents witnessed slavery's dissolution as slaves escaped their masters and fled to Union lines or into the non-slaveholding states. These “contraband” provided witness to the war's devastating impact on the institution Confederates wished to preserve; now the war threatened the viability of slavery. Armed with the daily reminder of slavery's collapse, residents wondered how to reconstruct white liberty without black bondage. Emancipation on the residents' terms seemed appealing, particularly as most West Virginians loathed abolitionists and feared their influence in their new state. Statehood promoters campaigned on the premise that racial hierarchy would survive without slavery in the new state. An exodus of slaves and freed blacks following statehood would produce a demographic “whitening,” supporters declared, preserving the new state for white residents only. The few remaining freed blacks would labor in menial, service-oriented positions, a visual manifestation of the racial hierarchy

West Virginians sought to perpetuate. Restrictive laws, including corporal punishment, extended antebellum justice on African Americans into the statehood years. Though slavery would eventually cease to operate, the institution’s shadow would linger and shape West Virginia.

### Statehood and Slavery

The Constitutional Convention convened in Wheeling on November 26, 1861. Critical issues lay ahead for delegates, notably defining the state boundaries; identifying a name for the new state; and, above all, settling the issue of slavery.<sup>6</sup> In approximately one month, delegates had decided the first two issues along with approving a new voting method.<sup>7</sup> But some delegates feared that the convention’s progress outpaced residents’ desires. A “body of radicals and extremists” seized control of the convention, First and Second Wheeling Convention delegate John J. Davis lamented, and threatened to “change *in toto* the character of our State government.” Such men wanted to “give us a Yankee constitution and laws,” a prospect that “will defeat the whole movement in West V[irginia].” With the question of slavery still left unsettled, Davis feared that these “radicals and extremists” would institute changes without first consulting their constituents. Many westerners, Davis believed, considered government-sanctioned emancipation anathema and that delegates should avoid such a consideration.<sup>8</sup>

While the convention settled some debates, the “more difficult question of slavery is as yet untouched,” Wheeling banker Chester D. Hubbard observed. And without a resolution on slavery, the “whole movement for division . . . can not be accomplished at present.” Hubbard identified the different poles occupied by residents on the issue of slavery. He noted that some western Virginians “prefer saying nothing about slavery in the constitution while others are for putting the declaration in” the document. Proponents of the former, like Waitman T. Willey, argued that members should “say nothing, [and] do nothing” concerning slavery, ultimately hopeful that the war would hasten slavery’s demise. Members of the latter, including Gordon Battelle, were “disposed to give the subject an airing,” ultimately believing that a frank conversation about slavery would remind residents about the institutions’ deleterious effects and that the region’s future development should mirror that of its northern neighbors.<sup>9</sup> “We may say that we are a Southern State, and that we ought to have a negro policy, just as many foolish people in Western Virginia have said for years past,” the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* declared, but such pro-slavery thoughts only “mock, deride, and curse us.”<sup>10</sup> Still, few delegates appeared to agree with Battelle. After conversing with Peter G. Van Winkle, delegate Henry



Chester Dorman Hubbard (source: West Virginia Archives & History)

Dering cheerfully reported that only “a handful” supported Battelle’s position and that delegates “will not have any trouble in keeping the vexed question out of the Constitution.”<sup>11</sup> Hubbard agreed, suggesting that the convention should “indicate our future policy on this question” but offer no firm declarations concerning slavery’s future. By late 1861, slavery’s future in the proposed West Virginia—as in the nation—remained uncertain.<sup>12</sup>

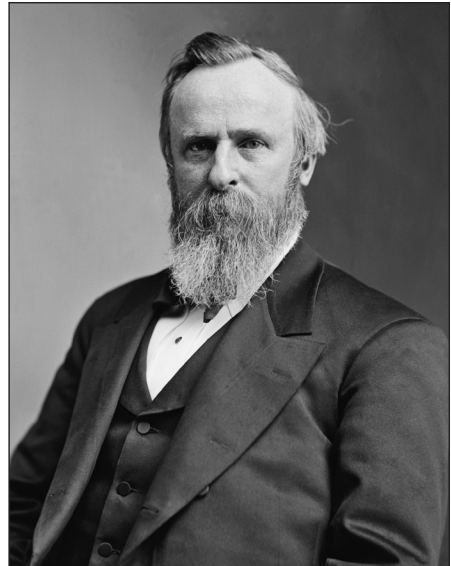
The uncertainty surrounding slavery’s future in the proposed state reflected tensions across the nation and in the proposed state. Slavery provided structure and meaning to the political acts, privileges, and benefits white western Virginians had secured after decades of conflict and compromise with their eastern

brethren. With slavery and democratic politics inextricably interwoven, the destruction of the former threatened the latter, a scenario northern abolitionists and some delegates appeared to disregard. As the *Clarksburg National Telegraph* averred, “fanatical abolitionists” like Battelle who advocated emancipation “cling to the ebony, woolly-headed god of their idolatry.” Battelle should labor for the “preservation of the liberties of the twenty millions of white people who are fighting to retain their free institutions than to be wasting time in endeavoring to liberate the few thousand slaves of West Virginia.” But if Battelle and his ilk succeeded in foisting emancipation upon West Virginians, what other legislation would they enact? Would they seek racial equality at the ballot box?<sup>13</sup> Unless free-state advocates could ensure the perpetuation of racial hierarchy without slavery, West Virginia’s prospects as a free state appeared fleeting.

While white western Virginians debated slavery’s future in the proposed state, actions undertaken by black western Virginians helped further the cause of emancipation. Enslaved blacks in western Virginia, like those in eastern Virginia, the Sea Islands along the South Carolina coast, and other areas where Union troops presided, had begun self-emancipating. By the summer of 1861, runaway slaves, or “contrabands,” became commonplace

across western Virginia. In October 1861, an “old Virginia negro” from Wirt County accompanied four companies of Union soldiers who had returned to Wheeling. The escaped slave “belongs to a man now in the rebel army.”<sup>14</sup> As Union Brig. Gen. Benjamin F. Kelley pushed further into the mountains in late 1861, more slaves took the opportunity to self-emancipate. In Romney, “[q]uite a large number of contrabands . . . tumbled” into the Union camp “expecting to be set free,” though the general planned to confine them until their masters reclaimed them.<sup>15</sup> In southern Western Virginia, future president Rutherford B. Hayes encountered numerous runaway slaves while stationed as a Union soldier in Fayetteville during the winter of 1861–1862. Hayes witnessed “a party of contrabands [who] started for Ohio” and remarked that they will likely “be entitled to freedom, as I understand the rule adopted by our Government” since their master served in the Confederate army.<sup>16</sup> By early 1862, Hayes reported that local secessionists warned slaves that Union soldiers would “cut off arms of some negroes” and “sell the rest in Cuba.” Such rumors reflected the instability wrought by the war and the continued fleeing of slaves from their masters.<sup>17</sup>

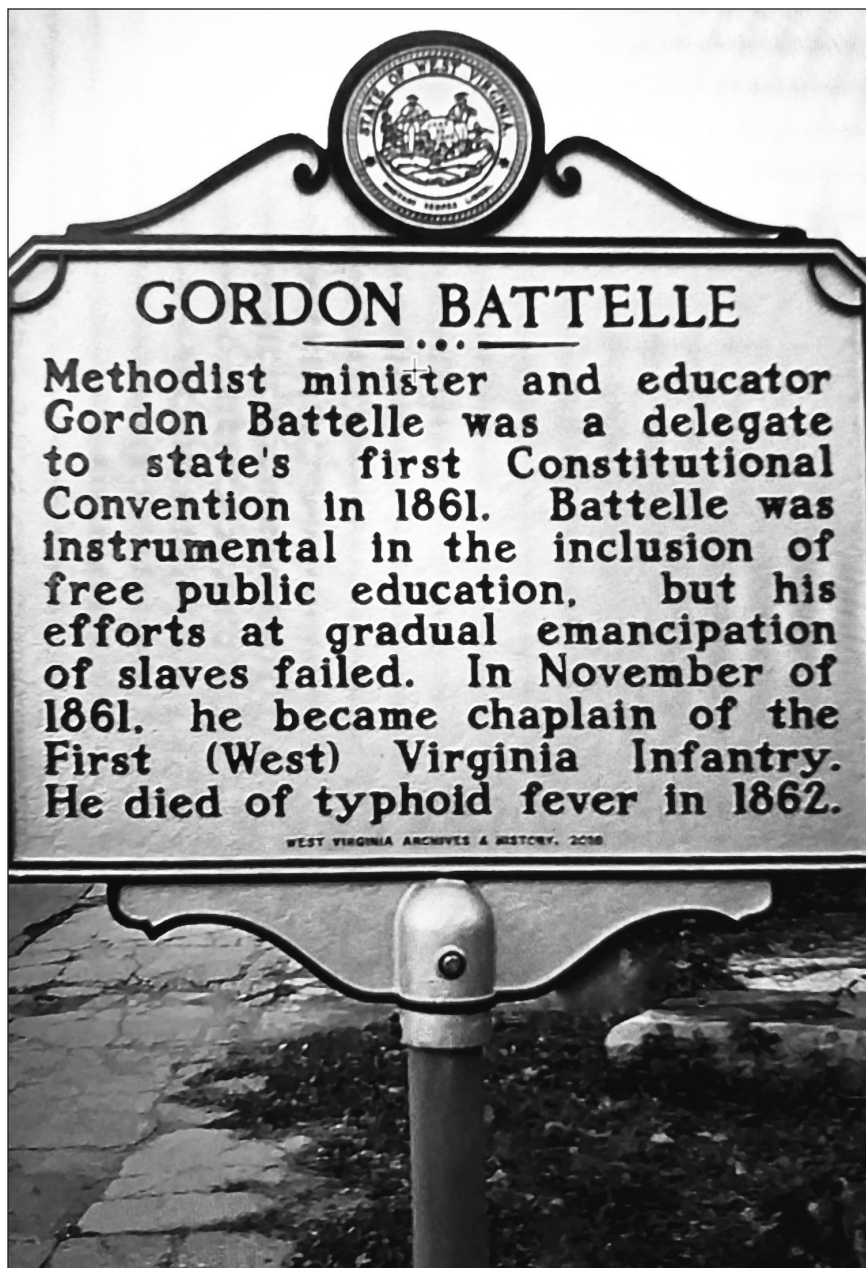
Delegates reconvened in early January 1862 as slaves continued to self-emancipate and the war entered into another year. Gordon Battelle introduced resolutions on slavery similar to those he had presented in the previous meeting, including a colonization plan and delaying gradual emancipation until July 4, 1865. Delegates tabled those resolutions.<sup>18</sup> Henry Dering chastised Battelle for once again “press[ing] this subject upon us” and feared that further agitation on slavery “will prove the opening of Pandoras Box.”<sup>19</sup> Dering predicted that such resolutions would “prove . . . fatal before the people” and would only “produce disturbance[s]” in West Virginia and other Union slave states.<sup>20</sup> The *Wellsburg Herald* agreed with Dering’s conclusion. “The people will not vote for gradual emancipation or any other interference with the rights of slave owners.” Many delegates would “snap and snarl” if Battelle continued to persist in his antislavery mission, jeopardizing the entire statehood movement.<sup>21</sup>



Rutherford B. Hayes (source: Wikimedia Commons restored.jpg)

Battelle persisted despite these fatalistic predictions. On February 12, he introduced a set of similar resolutions that prohibited African Americans from entering the state after the constitution's ratification and paired this with a more lenient gradual emancipation clause. These resolutions reflected residents' desire to demographically "whiten" the state and thus remove African Americans from it. West Virginia voters, not constitutional delegates, would either ratify or reject these resolutions.<sup>22</sup> Delegates tabled these resolutions, too, but only by a narrow margin, twenty-four to twenty-three.<sup>23</sup> The following day, Hancock County minister Joseph Pomeroy proposed a compromise. West Virginians "do not want free negroes here," Pomeroy declared, leading him to recommend the adoption of Battelle's prohibition on African Americans entering the state following the constitution's ratification. By a forty-eight to one margin, delegates adopted Battelle's motion. Following the vote, Marion County delegate Hiram Raymond instructed Battelle to "never mention slavery here again."<sup>24</sup> The convention adjourned a few days later after formally adopting a new state constitution.

Residents' mixed reactions to the proposed constitution reflected the divided perspectives on the issue of slavery in the proposed state. Battelle's resolution prohibiting the importation of any African Americans, free or enslaved, amounted to a disappointing defeat for "free soil" advocates. A Tyler County resident derisively referred to it as "our pro-slavery Constitution" and doubted that Congress would approve this constitution.<sup>25</sup> The *Wellsburg Herald*, though, acknowledged the difficulty in introducing Battelle's prohibition measure. A "direct emancipation clause . . . would have shocked long-existing prejudices of a majority of the people," the newspaper reasoned. Aggressive advocates of emancipation "make a great noise, [but] in numbers they don't amount to much outside of the Panhandle." The "people," it concluded, "are not yet ripe for that question."<sup>26</sup> Though some Republicans and free-state supporters hoped that West Virginia's climate and lack of southern staples would compel African Americans to move to warmer climates, procreation would likely ensure slavery's presence in the new state.<sup>27</sup> Many West Virginians "seem to rely with implicit confidence upon the silent innovations of future years for [slavery's] elimination from our midst," an unnamed resident remarked. "The voice of history is a disappointment to their cherished hopes." While many white residents had insisted for decades that the decreasing slave population would eventually liberate their region, slavery remained a central political, social, and economic feature. Why would this time be any different, residents wondered.<sup>28</sup>



In West Virginia's First Constitutional Convention, Gordon Battelle twice introduced resolutions to gradually emancipate slaves. The second time, he was chastised for his efforts both by other delegates and the media. The West Virginia Sesquicentennial Highway Historical Marker above recognizes his contributions to the state (source: West Virginia Archives & History).

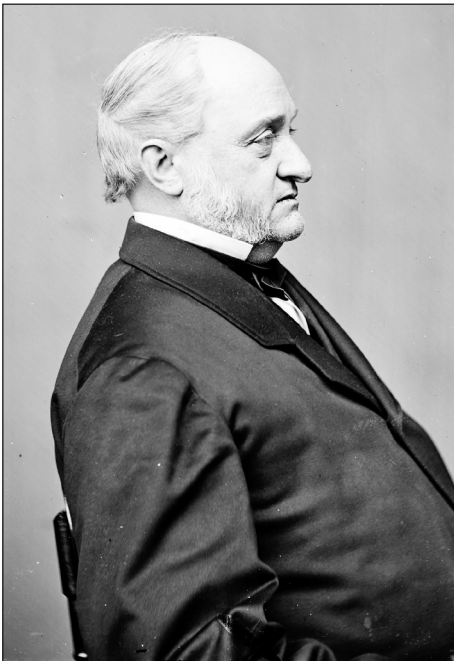
Other Western Virginia politicians and residents considered Battelle's resolution as a compromise that saved the statehood movement. Henry Dering predicted that had the convention adopted all three of Battelle's resolutions, "the whole . . . Sou[th] Western Delegation would have left . . . and have got their whole people to oppose it." The new constitution "would have been voted down by the Counties from Harrison [County] to the Kentucky line."<sup>29</sup> Taylor County farmer William W. Warder maintained that delegates constructed "a firstrate constitution" and had "settled the niger question without any excitement." He predicted that the compromise "will be received by all parties with sadisfaction."<sup>30</sup> A Preston County resident believed that the new constitution would receive the "suffrage of *every friend of a New State*, whatever may be his proclivities in regard to the colored race [emphasis in original]."<sup>31</sup> In Wheeling, Chester Hubbard applauded the "compromise" enacted by the convention, as African Americans would either "flourish or perish as the case may be."<sup>32</sup> The *Wellsburg Herald* agreed with Hubbard's conclusion. The new constitution would "not interfere with the master's rights" but simply allowed slavery to either "stand" or "fall."<sup>33</sup> In short, the approval of Battelle's resolutions reflected the uncertainty still surrounding slavery. By not taking a firm position on emancipation, delegates appeared to implicitly rely upon the war—and contrabands—to resolve this issue for the proposed state and the nation.

On April 3, West Virginia voters approved the new constitution by a wide margin, 18,862 in favor to 514 opposed. In some precincts, residents could also vote on a nonbinding gradual emancipation clause. As with the proposed constitution, West Virginians overwhelmingly supported gradual emancipation, 6,052 to 616.<sup>34</sup> Residents offered different interpretations regarding the results of the latter. Free-state supporters believed that this vote provided "an unmistakable indication that our people want to make their State a free State."<sup>35</sup> The *Wellsburg Herald* declared the informal poll on gradual emancipation "a blow at slavery, and . . . [it] cripples the rebellion more than the defeat of an army."<sup>36</sup> For some West Virginians, the vote on the gradual emancipation represented their opportunity to destroy the institution that had instigated the war and torn the Union asunder. These residents blamed slaveholders who prized their chattel over white political equality and for the preceding decades of constitutional battles in the commonwealth. "The wicked rebellion, as well as all the past and present injustices suffered by Western Virginia," Upshur County resident William M. Shinn declared, "are due to *Slavery* and the evil principles engendered by it [emphasis in original]."<sup>37</sup> Other residents were more pragmatic. As a Ritchie County resident argued, the "road by which slave States have



traveled into the Union, has become so slippery with the blood of the brave men of our nation that it cannot be traveled any more.” The war had made slavery unpalatable and West Virginia’s admission as a slave state impractical. Placing slavery on a path toward gradual extinction would ensure the state’s admission to the Union.<sup>38</sup>

Still, others read the results differently, providing insight into how residents interpreted the intersection of slavery and federalism. John G. Jacob inferred that residents’ overwhelming approval of gradual emancipation signaled their desire to control emancipation without congressional interference and should not be interpreted as abolitionism.<sup>39</sup> This opportunity to control the proposed state’s internal affairs encouraged more men to head to the polls. As Arthur I. Boreman reported, “[M]any good men in Wheeling, who generally took no part in politics, were opposed to congress prescribing the provisions of our constitution on any subject embraced in it.” In short, fear of “congressional interference” led many residents to support statehood and gradual emancipation lest northern abolitionists in Congress attempt to control the process. By voting in favor of the proposed state and gradual emancipation residents sought to narrow the consequences arising from a war over slavery.<sup>40</sup>



Peter Godwin Van Winkle (source: Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress)

The growth of the Republican Party in the region further complicated the politics of the statehood movement and slavery. Some residents supported gradual emancipation in an attempt to limit the power wielded by Republicans, a group that often appeared allied with northern abolitionists. Chester Hubbard reported that “Republicanism has full sway in the Panhandle” and that Republicans “are making every thing bend to the behest of party.”<sup>41</sup> The *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*’s stance on gradual emancipation in connection with statehood “has been jesuitical,” Van Winkle grumbled. Newspaper editor Archibald Campbell and his ilk opposed the “New State unless the Abolitionists can rule,” what Van

Winkle considered a “humiliating condition.”<sup>42</sup> He later prayed that this Republican “clique will be able to lay the devil [of emancipation] they have raised.”<sup>43</sup> John J. Davis, disgusted with the “Anti-Slavery parasites” in the state legislature who attempted to foist emancipation on West Virginians, voted against an antislavery measure.<sup>44</sup> He later predicted that the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* would provide “Comments” on this negative vote and that the newspaper along with other Republicans would encourage his constituents to convene “another indignation meeting” against him. With Republicans seemingly guiding the statehood movement, many residents feared that these Republicans and their abolitionist allies would mandate racial and political equality within the state’s borders. By determining how West Virginians would control and resolve the issue of slavery, Davis and others believed that they could remove such “parasites” from the body politic before they infected it with radical ideas.<sup>45</sup>

For some residents the fear of sickness was tangible and had already occurred. John Carlile, a one-time supporter of statehood, now emerged as a vocal opponent and leader of a conservative faction wary of the war and its expanding effects. And as senator, Carlile possessed a platform for his views. The senator feared that the war and demands for unquestioned patriotism provided a “pretext for transcending Constitutional limits,” notably private property rights. By allegedly assisting runaway slaves, the Union army acted as an abolitionist agent and was complicit in undermining the Constitution.<sup>46</sup> “The people of the State themselves must be left free to regulate their own domestic affairs,” the *National Telegraph* stressed. The prospect of “Congressional dictation” took on added urgency as the “negro loving fanatics in Congress” appeared bent on making West Virginia a free state without “the *people* determin[ing] the question for *themselves* in in *their* own way [emphasis in original].” That West Virginians were considering a gradual emancipation clause provided enough evidence that the entire movement had been tainted by northern abolitionists and must be immediately halted. As the war continued into its second year with little prospect of conclusion, some residents feared that the Lincoln administration and northern abolitionists would become more aggressive in attacking slavery and trampling upon civil liberties. By controlling the process of emancipation, West Virginians would avoid such a fate.<sup>47</sup>

Residents’ aspiration for a new state deepened in mid-1862 as Union Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan’s Peninsula Campaign appeared poised to capture Richmond and end the war before an independent West Virginia had been secured. Gov. Francis Pierpont, confident that the “rebellion” would be “shortly put down,” contacted President Lincoln, inquiring about treatment



John Snyder Carlile (source: West Virginia Archives & History)

of former Confederates and their political status in the Reorganized Government of Virginia.<sup>48</sup> Other West Virginians shared this same expectation in early 1862. “We are watching and waiting with anxious hearts for the fall of Richmond,” Morgantown attorney J. Marshall Hagens reported.<sup>49</sup> Residents’ anxiousness mingled with their fears of reuniting with neighbors who had sided with the Confederacy. If Richmond fell before West Virginia became a state, Harrison Hagens of Preston County explained, the “rebel constituency in the East will . . . send men to represent them, who will tax the West to pay this rebel war debt, and rule it with an iron rod.” The “pitiless

storm of wrath” that westerners had endured over the preceding decades would be “made hotter by disappointed ambition in this wicked rebellion.”<sup>50</sup> With Confederates unable to create a national “cotton oligarchy,” one Clarksburg newspaper predicted that these embittered Confederates would establish a similar “aristocratic structure” in Virginia where the “wealthy” controlled the government and diminished “the influence of the poor man.”<sup>51</sup> McClellan’s Peninsula Campaign likely encouraged many West Virginians to support the statehood movement, even if it meant slavery’s gradual abolition. Under this scenario, residents would at least shape the state with little, if any, northern and abolitionist influence and deliver themselves from the wrath of their eastern brethren.

### **The Final Battle for Statehood**

By late June 1862, the Senate Committee on Territories released an amended version of the West Virginia statehood bill.<sup>52</sup> This version, authored by Virginia Senator John Carlile, increased West Virginia by adding fifteen counties and included a gradual emancipation clause that a new constitutional convention would have to ratify.<sup>53</sup> Carlile’s political chicanery appeared to doom the statehood movement. “The bill carries death to our new state,” Henry Dering lamented, as the slave population included in the additional fifteen counties would rankle northern Republicans. “Our people are in



Waitman Thomas Wiley (source: Brady-Handy Photograph Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, photo by Mathew Brady)

despair,” Dering reported, “and many have now given up all hopes of a new state.”<sup>54</sup> Methodist Episcopal minister Moses Tichenell of Marion County likewise bemoaned the proposed enlargement of the state. Shenandoah Valley residents possessed “sympathies, habits, and . . . interests” identical to those of the “strong niggerdum of the east” and antagonistic to West Virginians. Though his neighbors “are not Abolitionists in the present acceptance of the offensive term,” they despised the “rule of [S]outhern slave[ry]” and sought freedom from the “tyrannical lash of the proud nabobs of eastern Virginia” at any cost, even that of emancipation.<sup>55</sup>

Wiley, fearful that Carlile’s changes would derail the entire statehood movement, sought compromise.<sup>56</sup> His “Wiley Amendment” would free slaves born after July 4, 1863, while those younger than ten would be liberated upon turning twenty-one; slaves older than ten but younger than twenty-one would remain enslaved until they reached twenty-five. The Wiley Amendment also banned importing slaves into the state. Senators approved the compromise and West Virginia’s admission by a twenty-three to seventeen vote.<sup>57</sup> When the House of Representatives reconvened in December, former opponents of West Virginia’s admission emerged as supporters because slavery’s demise in the state appeared certain.<sup>58</sup> On December 10, representatives passed West Virginia’s statehood application, ninety-six to fifty-five. West Virginia’s statehood bill next required Lincoln’s signature.<sup>59</sup>

Lincoln felt conflicted on the statehood bill. Issues of slavery, constitutionality, and timing vexed the president, leading him to solicit arguments from cabinet members concerning the state’s admission.<sup>60</sup> On December 31, 1862, President Lincoln concurred with those cabinet members who agreed that West Virginia’s admission was “expedient” and constitutionally sound. West Virginians’ loyalty to the Union and their “aid” in fighting the rebellion manifested those residents’ devotion to the federal

government, Lincoln declared. The addition of the Willey Amendment ensured that “slave soil” would become “free,” what Lincoln considered an “irrevocable encroachment upon the cause of the rebellion.” The president applauded West Virginians’ “secession in favor of the constitution” and granted their request for statehood.<sup>61</sup>

West Virginia’s admission into the Union would become official pending ratification of the Willey Amendment by a constitutional convention and public referendum. For residents sympathetic to the Confederacy, opposed to “congressional dictation,” or resistant to separation in general, the referendum provided another opportunity to derail the statehood movement.<sup>62</sup> African Americans, opponents declared, would flood West Virginia and demand full and equal access to employment opportunities and the ballot box. To perpetuate and protect racial hierarchy, West Virginians must reject the Willey Amendment.

Pro-statehood West Virginians launched a counter-offensive, insisting that ratifying the Willey Amendment would strengthen, not threaten, racial hierarchy. Gradual emancipation would hasten slavery’s decline in the region, accelerating a demographic “whitening” already unfolding across the region. This erosion of slave labor would facilitate the expansion of “free labor,” transforming West Virginia into an industrial state like Ohio or Pennsylvania. Removing slaves from the state would also remove West Virginia outside “Jeff. Davis’ kingdom,” an aristocratic nation allegedly bent on disenfranchising non-slaveholders.<sup>63</sup> Access to the ballot box in West Virginia, though, would continue for white men regardless of wealth, while the state’s few African Americans would be disenfranchised. West Virginians’ abolition of slavery would also hasten the war’s conclusion, a stinging rebuke to eastern Virginians whose zeal to protect their slave property now threatened its existence. West Virginians, supporters proclaimed, would continue to enjoy the benefits of slavery as “whiteness” would reign as the principal political ethos.

West Virginians in favor of statehood stressed the benefits of “free soil,” crafting arguments that touched on Virginia’s political and sectional history. Upon hearing the news that the House of Representatives approved West Virginia’s admission, an anonymous writer in the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* celebrated West Virginia’s policy of “equal taxation, [and] equal representation.” These democratic principles “have animated . . . all true Western Virginians for many long years.”<sup>64</sup> In a meeting in Marshall County, Brooke County merchant Campbell Tarr, a Wheeling convention delegate, blamed the “slaveholding oligarchy of Eastern Virginia” for the “whirlpool of destruction” that now engulfed the country. Tarr expressed

little remorse for the “poor Eastern Virginia rebel wretches . . . suffering all the horrors of a desolating and destructive war.” This cabal had governed the state by the maxim “rule or ruin” over the preceding decades, and without western allies, eastern Virginians faced certain destruction.<sup>65</sup> A Marion County resident reported that his neighbors “are highly gratified with the cheering prospect of being separated from Eastern Virginia.” For decades, western Virginians had lived in “Niggerdom,” where all political matters centered on slavery. But West Virginia’s establishment and slavery’s inevitable demise had overthrown the “king” and “master” of this tyrannical domain.<sup>66</sup> Though secessionists “might prate forever about rights, and might appeal to all our Virginia-ism, and all our nominal connection with the institutions of the South,” West Virginia was not a southern state, the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* asserted. Richmond legislators’ attempts to make the Northwest “[S]outhern” failed because residents shared more in common with their “free soil” neighbors than eastern Virginians.<sup>67</sup>

Proponents also maintained that West Virginia’s transformation into a free state reflected geographical realities. As the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* explained, “natural causes, silently and uncontrollably at work, were . . . ridding Western Virginia of slavery,” as the region’s “climate” and “soil” were hostile to this “foreign institution.” Further, West Virginia’s proximity to Ohio and Pennsylvania shaped residents’ interpretation of African-American bondage. The “influence,” “politics,” “industries,” and “sentiments” of West Virginia’s neighbors “were steadily destroying the hold of slavery” in the region.<sup>68</sup> Abolishing slavery promised to expand industrial development and place the state on a similar economic trajectory as that of its neighbors. The “black spots that has given us so much trouble and retarded our growth and prosperity so greatly” would be removed, Henry Dering predicted.<sup>69</sup> Slavery had “paralyzed” West Virginia’s economic development over the preceding decades, Willey declared, while Ohio’s “rapid progress” demonstrated the benefits of “free soil” and “free labor.” With slavery removed, West Virginians would finally unleash the state’s “inexhaustible mineral resources” that had remained undisturbed for decades.<sup>70</sup> “Vote in the New State,” he instructed Wheeling laborers, and “[y]ou will have . . . free labor.”<sup>71</sup>

The economic prosperity wrought by “free labor” would also protect white men’s political rights. Confederate leaders sought to establish an aristocratic government and place white laborers in the same economic stratum that African-American slaves occupied, statehood supporters alleged. In a meeting in Triadelphia, Gov. Francis Pierpont declared that Confederates believe “that the working classes are the mudsills of society”

and that “capital should own labor.” These beliefs revealed Confederates’ true character. “Aristocracy never could tolerate the idea that the country should belong to those who rightfully cultivate it,” he proclaimed.<sup>72</sup> George Porter, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates in Wheeling, agreed. In a gathering in Wheeling, Porter confirmed that Confederates “are not a democratic people.” They opposed “a government of all the people” and sought to restrict the “right of suffrage” until only property owners could vote.<sup>73</sup> In a mass meeting in Philippi, residents maintained that Confederates sought to create a government “in which negro slavery shall be made a fundamental principle of government.” Slaveholding would constitute the “basis of civil preferment, [and] of elevated social positions and distinctions.” West Virginia’s creation, however, would protect residents from these antidemocratic Confederates.<sup>74</sup>

Statehood supporters’ arguments resonated with many residents who had witnessed political and economic developments unfold over the preceding decades. The issue of race in a post-slavery state, though, remained divisive. Abolitionists, opponents maintained, sought to transform West Virginia into a colony for freed blacks, initiating a demographic “blackening” of the region and a dismantling of the region’s racial hierarchy. Defying congressional emancipation by rejecting the Willey Amendment would convince northern Republicans and their Northwest allies that residents would not submit to the “Wheeling Abolition clique.”<sup>75</sup> This clique, West Virginia conservatives charged, attempted to foist a constitution crafted by northern abolitionists and their allies upon residents to maintain “themselves in power and carry out their promise to the Abolitionists of New England to give the New State *to them* [emphasis in original].” The new constitution offered little benefit for white West Virginians.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, a state constitution tinged by abolitionism threatened all residents. “No matter where abolition touches,” the *National Telegraph* maintained, “it palsies, pollutes and destroys.”<sup>77</sup>

Opponents hoped to seize upon residents’ widespread hatred for abolitionism by blurring distinctions between Republicans, abolitionists, and statehood sympathizers and advocates, a tactic that centered on the “inevitable *nigger* question [emphasis in original].”<sup>78</sup> Gradual emancipation would not “whiten” the state but “blacken” the mountains, opponents insisted, as African Americans would flood the state seeking employment and political and civic equality. Aided by northern abolitionists and their West Virginia allies, freed blacks would control the state. Skeptical residents needed to only look at Lincoln’s draconian policies on confiscating slaveholders’ property for evidence of abolitionists’ increasing power over the president and the administration’s prosecution of the war. Abolitionists

had transformed a war for the Union into a crusade for racial equality, a transformation that now targeted West Virginia.

John Carlile emerged as a prominent exponent of such views. In a speech in Clarksburg, Carlile “classed all friends of the New State Bill in the same category with Wendell Phillips and J. R. Giddings.” These northern abolitionists wished only to foist racial equality upon West Virginians, even recruiting residents to carry out this nefarious plan. The “Secessionists of this vicinity were greatly pleased with the remarks,” reported Union soldier E. C. Moderwell, while “many undoubted Union men felt outraged by the same.” Carlile “advised his hearers to resist Congressional interference or dictation, if needs be with the sword.” In short, white men in West Virginia had to resist abolitionism.<sup>79</sup>

President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation deepened opponents’ convictions that abolitionists demanded slavery’s destruction. Lincoln “obey[ed] the behests of the insane fanatics he has encouraged around him,” the *National Telegraph* alleged, notably those “most ultra men of the northern faction.” Unionists in Kentucky, Missouri, and Western Virginia, confronted by the president’s “contemptuous disregard” for their loyalty, now “*must* surrender to the fanatics of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and the Western Reserve [emphasis in original].”<sup>80</sup> The enlistment of African Americans incensed residents. West Virginia politicians who supported such a measure “must think [their] constituents [to be] among the most narrow, hidebound and contracted of men, if they would support an act, so objectionable” that the bill’s “grossness” was manifest to everyone.<sup>81</sup> Arthur Boreman reported that numerous Union soldiers “are opposed to the arming and making soldiers of negroes” and predicted that the policy would “produce disquietude, desertions, and . . . serious demoralization.”<sup>82</sup> Still, Republicans persisted in arming African Americans, a policy that would lead to the “extermination of both races in the slaveholding States.” These same men, claimed the *National Telegraph*, also endorsed the Willey Amendment.<sup>83</sup>

The 1862 mid-term election results’ buoyed opponents’ hopes that “Abolition rule is drawing to a close” and that the statehood movement would be foiled.<sup>84</sup> Lincoln’s unconstitutional policies, including his suspension of *habeas corpus* and authorization of military trials for “all rebels and insurgents, their aiders and abettors . . . and all persons discouraging volunteer enlistments, resisting militia drafts, or guilty of any disloyal practice” revealed the president’s true intentions.<sup>85</sup> This blanket condemnation smacked of executive tyranny and abolitionist meddling. Lincoln’s “band of demons may be able to construe anything they like into



disloyalty,” the Charleston *Guerilla* charged.<sup>86</sup> These “arbitrary arrests . . . were not made for the benefit of the country, but in behalf of the Abolition party,” the Wheeling *Daily Press* exclaimed, as the arrests “reduce[d] the opponents of that party to such an extremity of fear and trepidation that they would offer no political resistance to its universal domination.” Governor Pierpont allegedly “hankered” after similar power, “copying upon the Washington tyrants” to remove “obstacle[s] to his political projects,” including the creation of West Virginia.<sup>87</sup>

Pierpont’s quest for unconstitutional executive powers akin to Lincoln’s demonstrated to statehood opponents that the movement to create a new state was truly a plot to impose racial equality. Republicans, allied with abolitionists, promised much with West Virginia’s creation but their promises rang hollow. “Coming in as the Free Speech, Free Vote, Free Soil and Free man’s party,” Republicans offered “flimsy fictions about what great things are com[ing] to the New State,” the Wheeling *Daily Press* claimed.<sup>88</sup> Republicans’ “sole aim,” “every act,” and “highest ambition . . . irrespective of their own race or their government,” the *Morgantown Monitor* protested, “is for the negro.” Republicans’ “speeches are for the negro; their votes are for the negro; [and] *their* taxes are for the negro[emphasis in original].” Despite the “wild and reckless theories” expounded by “Abolitionists, fanatics, and many leaders of the Republican party,” the *Monitor’s* editor reminded his audience that African Americans constituted an “inferior race, deficient in judgment, and incapable of self-government.” This “inferior race” would clamor for political and social equality with West Virginia’s founding; would residents sanction such actions?<sup>89</sup>

Triadelphia residents pledged resistance to such efforts. “We look upon the effort to place the African upon an equality with the white man in Western Virginia as vain and foolish,” residents declared during a mass meeting. Previous attempts of imposing racial equality had failed, “bring[ing] demoralization and ruin to both” races and had threatened to “destroy the best interests of our country.” Welcoming “free negroes into Western Virginia,” residents further averred, was “unwise and ruinous to the order and good morals of our society.” These West Virginians promised resistance to abolitionists’ efforts.<sup>90</sup>

West Virginians’ opposition to the “black toadies” that advocated statehood reflected their concern that a new state would overturn the region’s established racial hierarchy.<sup>91</sup> A “majority” of residents opposed the “negro-equalizing amendment” known as the Willey Amendment, one conservative newspaper declared, but military and political authorities at the behest of abolitionists prevented a full and open discussion of the issue.<sup>92</sup> West

Virginians are to be “enslaved, and . . . Africanized” if voters ratified the Willey Amendment, the *Clarksburg Patriot* warned.<sup>93</sup> Wheeling abolitionists “would not pass the New State bill without imposing the *condition* that it should be an Abolition State, and a roosting and lurking place for the negroes [emphasis in original].”<sup>94</sup> Statehood supporters hoped to transform West Virginia into “a colony for runaway negroes,” welcoming African Americans with the promise of liberation by the Willey Amendment.<sup>95</sup> The *National Telegraph* suggested renaming the amendment “An act to Africanize North Western Virginia, and to enslave the white inhabitants thereof” to more accurately represent the amendment’s purpose.<sup>96</sup> “Give us a new State, un-Abolitionized,” the *Wheeling Daily Press* demanded, “a new State without the secret machinery which is to guide its control and direction into Abolition.”<sup>97</sup> Protecting West Virginians’ racial hierarchy demanded that residents oppose this abolitionist attempt to impose gradual emancipation upon unwilling residents, even if this opposition undermined the statehood movement. As the *Clarksburg Patriot* proclaimed, “[E]very man who is opposed to making Western Virginia a free negro colony” must reject the new state.<sup>98</sup>

Statehood proponents, though, maintained that West Virginia’s creation guaranteed and protected “whiteness,” even without slavery. West Virginia’s admission into the Union ensured that, regardless of the war’s outcome, Deep South planters would not politically enslave white residents or consider them “like slaves on the block.”<sup>99</sup> The Willey Amendment would compel slaveholders to sell or emancipate their chattel, while the prohibition on importing slaves would further “whiten” the Mountain State. And with a climate inhospitable for freed blacks or plantation agriculture, African Americans had little incentive to remain in the state. The demographic “whitening” that would unfold across West Virginia promised a thorough “whitening” of the political process, too.

West Virginia’s demographic “whitening” had been unfolding for years, statehood proponents declared, as census data revealed a decline in the slave population. “The end of slavery is a foregone conclusion,” the *Wellsburg Herald* insisted.<sup>100</sup> In the northern panhandle, both slavery and “free negroes” have been “dead letters,” and John G. Jacob believed that the “entire free black population can be counted on the fingers.”<sup>101</sup> Waitman Willey agreed with Jacob’s reasoning. Willey, a slaveholder, considered the number of African-American slaves in West Virginia “too small to stand in the way of the public good.” Further, the state’s “geographical situation” meant “that slavery could never exist here to any great extent, even if it were desirable to have it.” Willey and other statehood proponents ignored the

region’s long history with slavery and the slave trade, insisting instead that few residents desired slaves and fewer free blacks. By supporting statehood, residents would rid themselves of both groups.<sup>102</sup>

Emancipating African-American slaves raised the question of freed blacks’ status in the new state. West Virginians held a “deep and universal prejudice against this class of persons,” confessed one statehood proponent.<sup>103</sup> Waitman Willey acknowledged that adversaries “clamor[ed] about the danger of free-negro-ism,” but he and other advocates believed that African Americans would not constitute a problem in West Virginia.<sup>104</sup> A “very large proportion of the slaves will be converted into money and started Southward,” the *Wellsburg Herald* declared.<sup>105</sup> “[O]ur Northern negrophobists” further reasoned that “free negroes will remain where they were born and continue to work for their masters,” especially those on Southern plantations. The *Herald* predicted that the Emancipation Proclamation would accelerate the “current of negro travel . . . southward,” draining the African-American population and whitening the Upper South.<sup>106</sup>

But would the few African Americans who remained increase competition in the job market and depress wages? Statehood opponents maintained that West Virginia’s founding would trigger a flood of freed blacks, where “every nigger” would push “a white man out of employment,” and local German immigrants “would all be turned out of employment and free negroes substitute[d] in their stead.”<sup>107</sup> Statehood promoters dismissed this baseless rumor. African Americans “will seek menial employment as they always and everywhere do,” one supporter declared.<sup>108</sup> “The hotel, the barber shop, [and] the steamboat, are the paradise of the free negroes,” answered another proponent, as blacks would labor as “waiters, porters, barbers or hostlers” while avoiding any “mechanical employment.” These service occupations reinforced racial hierarchy, as African Americans would labor in subordinate service industries while white residents occupied more prestigious positions. This unnamed author assured West Virginians that African Americans “naturally adapt themselves” to those “peculiar services,” calming fears that freed blacks would seek to challenge that labor hierarchy.<sup>109</sup>

African Americans’ subordinate position reflected the will of Providence, a universal truth that statehood supporters endorsed. “How can the negro, whom God has made so inferior to the white, morally, intellectually and physically, ever be made his equal[?]”<sup>110</sup> West Virginians received confirmation of such beliefs from minstrel shows, a popular cultural performance that allowed audience members to express their racial anxieties and collective fears of African Americans.<sup>111</sup> Minstrels’ mockery of African Americans reinforced statehood advocates’ assertions that the

“ignorant African slave” and his “offspring” were unsuited to the labor required in West Virginia’s economy. White laborers in West Virginia, not African Americans, would provide the labor needed to unleash the new state’s mineral resources.<sup>112</sup>

The menial employment African Americans occupied reflected their political status in the new state, too. “The hackneyed song of negro equality, negro jurors, and the like, is the old argument of secessionists,” a resident grumbled.<sup>113</sup> This “old argument” was impossible in West Virginia, supporters explained, because the new state “will have the strongest anti-free negro laws of any loyal State in the Union.” West Virginia would enforce the “old laws of Virginia,” laws characterized as “severe and restrictive enough to meet the fears of the most timorous.”<sup>114</sup> Article 11, Section 8 of West Virginia’s proposed constitution stated that the “common law and the laws of the State of Virginia” concerning free African Americans would remain untouched. These laws included forced removal of freed blacks older than twenty-one, imprisoning individuals who transported blacks into the state, and imposing fines on African Americans who refused to leave the state. Corporal punishment against this last group would also be enforced. Slavery’s shadow would still linger over the mountains even though the institution would soon no longer officially exist.<sup>115</sup>

Slavery’s demise not only benefited West Virginia but the entire nation, as the institution’s death in the Mountain State would hasten the war’s conclusion. “This is a Pro-Slavery Rebellion,” the *Fairmont National* declared, “fomented by slaveholders, and for Slavery’s sake.” West Virginia’s admission would assist in slavery’s “overthrow and extinction.”<sup>116</sup> Many statehood advocates endorsed Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation as a similar means of destroying the Confederacy and ending the war. The *Wellsburg Herald* believed that the proclamation would “speedily bring the war to an issue.”<sup>117</sup> In a new state mass meeting in Ohio County, residents “hail[ed] the President’s emancipation proclamation as an efficient means of destroying the prime cause and backbone of the present malignant and unholy rebellion.”<sup>118</sup> Ending the war would hopefully end the guerilla conflict that had terrorized residents, too. Arthur Boreman reported that counties below the northern panhandle were “*not safe* for a loyal man” and recommended that loyalists remain within “sight of the Ohio River [emphasis in original].”<sup>119</sup> Virginia Rep. Jacob B. Blair of Parkersburg instructed Willey to hold “the election [on the new constitution] as early as possible before warm weather when the guerrillas can infest the mountains and prevent the people from voting.” With the state’s future assured, such attacks would hopefully cease.<sup>120</sup>



Jacob Beeson Blair (source: Wikipedia)

The constitutional convention that reconvened in February 1863 enacted few substantive changes to the constitution ratified by voters the previous year. Compensating loyal slaveholders emerged as the most divisive issue, with James Brown of Kanawha demanding federal compensation for loyal slaveholders who immediately emancipated their slaves and James S. Wheat of Morgan County suggesting that funds derived from the sale of Confederate property, including slaves, be directed to loyal slaveholders.<sup>121</sup> Both proposals failed.<sup>122</sup> Rather, in a unanimous

vote, delegates approved the Willey Amendment fifty-four to zero, while agreeing to petition the federal government for two million dollars for loyal slaveholders.<sup>123</sup> West Virginia voters would ratify or reject the new constitution on March 26, the final obstacle to statehood.

On that date, West Virginia residents and soldiers voted overwhelmingly to ratify the new state constitution with the Willey Amendment, 28,318 in favor to 572 opposed.<sup>124</sup> Upon receiving the returns, on April 20, President Lincoln issued a proclamation that West Virginians had satisfied all constitutional obligations and West Virginia would be admitted into the Union on June 20, 1863.<sup>125</sup> The *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* celebrated the “wonderful” results, regarding the wide margin as a “grand and overwhelming . . . triumph.”<sup>126</sup> West Virginians’ demonstrated that they “didn’t need a new nigger State” but a “free State,” even though “such men as Carlile . . . were for the niggers” and attempted to sway voters to that perspective, too.<sup>127</sup> The creation of West Virginia—and the destruction of slavery—via the ballot box appeared inevitable as residents celebrated the election results.

### **“Whitening” the New State at the Expense of Blacks**

Slavery’s death via democracy, however, may have been somewhat premature and myopic. West Virginians’ initial policy on slavery only prohibited the importation of African American slaves, a resolution that signaled residents’ reluctance to dismantle the institution. Congressional

pressure compelled West Virginians to pursue compromise, but the accord reached by politicians and ratified by voters reflected residents' continued endorsement of proslavery beliefs and democratic principles. From a practical standpoint, slavery would continue to operate in the new state for decades. The Willey Amendment delayed emancipation for thousands of young slaves while older slaves would remain in bondage until death. African Americans could acquire freedom through self-emancipation or through manumission, but some slaveholders, wary of losing their investment, could look for prospective buyers in nearby Kentucky or Missouri. African-American bondage in West Virginia would likely continue into the twentieth century, when a majority of statehood leaders would have passed on and entrusted their descendants to tackle the final stages of emancipation. Could shifting political and racial norms reignite this emancipation debate? How would an independent and permanent Confederate nation shape this debate? With no prospective conclusion to the Civil War by 1863, slavery's future remained uncertain but few predicted the institution's demise in only a few years. Still, regardless of the Civil War's outcome, the "politics of slavery" would figure prominently over the coming decades, cementing slavery's centrality to politics.

Slavery's influence was manifest in the new constitution. While emancipation unfolded over the proceeding decades, laws imposed on African Americans promoted and perpetuated racial hierarchy. Corporal punishment remained on the books, authorizing white authorities to mete out punishment on unrepentant blacks. Freed blacks would perform menial labor, occupying low-level service positions while white laborers occupied more prestigious and lucrative positions. African Americans would not "blacken" West Virginia's growing industrial sector. This economic segregation carried over into politics. Statehood leaders' refusal to endorse African-American political and civil rights or countenance any status for blacks other than slavery reflected their desire to "whiten" the Mountain State. Disenfranchised and marginalized freed blacks provided similar visual evidence as enslaved African Americans before the war: politics remained the purview of white men. West Virginians' embrace of democratic reform with a new state exhibited neither a clean break from slavery nor their Virginia heritage that historians suggest.

Rather, the political "whitening" residents sought with statehood reflected a continuation of antebellum norms concerning race and politics, norms constructed and refined through residents' defense of African-American bondage and political equality for white men.

## Notes

1. Arthur I. Boreman, “Inaugural Address of Governor Arthur I. Boreman,” West Virginia Archives & History: West Virginia Division of Culture and History, [www.wvculture.org/history/boremania.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/boremania.html), accessed June 21, 2013.
2. Boreman, “Inaugural Address.”
3. Many current historians echo this argument. William Freehling, Daniel Crofts, and William Link insist that intrastate antebellum sectional conflict increased antislavery sentiment in northwestern Virginia, thereby providing a catalyst for emancipation during the Civil War. William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854–1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Freehling, *The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Daniel W. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); William A. Link, *Roots of Secession: Slavery and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Link, “‘This Bastard New Virginia’: Slavery, West Virginia Exceptionalism, and the Secession Crisis,” *West Virginia History: A Journal of Regional Studies* 3, no. 1 (2009): 37–56.
4. *Clarksburg (VA) Patriot*, April 3, 1863, 2.
5. Non-Republican voices within the Unionist cause have until recently received scant scholarly attention. Charles Ambler’s thesis concerning the sectionalism in Virginia shaped historiography for over half a century, as numerous historians interpreted the statehood movement as the climax of the sectional crisis that had characterized Virginia politics from the colonial era to the Civil War. Modern historians have generally agreed that Virginia’s decades-long sectional struggle culminated in the statehood movement, a movement driven by the same tensions and forces that tore the nation apart in 1861. Crofts, Freehling, and Link view conflicts in Virginia through a similar east-west prism, with secession and statehood as the only logical conclusion to this intrastate conflict. James Oakes’s argument in *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861–1865* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2013), regarding national Republicans’ attempts to undermine slavery, overestimates the initial appeal of antislavery in West(ern) Virginia, though many residents would adopt a similar platform to hasten the statehood movement. Still, the majority of residents remained cautious of Republicans’ aims in abolishing slavery. Charles H. Ambler, “The Cleavage between Eastern and Western Virginia,” *American Historical Review* 15, no. 4 (July 1910): 762–780; Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910); Theodore F. Lang, *Loyal West Virginia 1861–1865* (Baltimore: Deutsch Publishing Co., 1895); Henry Thomas Shanks, *Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847–1861* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1934), 211–212. Other earlier historians have echoed this interpretation. Granville Davisson Hall, Virgil A. Lewis, and George E. Moore contend that sectional grievances dating back to the American Revolution set in motion the creation of West Virginia, an inevitable result considering eastern Virginians’ refusal to embrace democratic reforms and abandon slavery.
6. As John Stealey III has noted, delegates approached resolving these issues through two approaches. Some delegates suggested that the 1851 Constitution required only slight modifications, while others maintained that eastern Virginians’ rebellion required westerners to overhaul that constitution and write a new one. John E. Stealey III, *West Virginia’s Civil War-era Constitution: Loyal Revolution, Confederate Counter-Revolution, and the Convention of 1872* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2013), 74–75.
7. The boundary issue focused on expanding the state boundaries to include an additional thirty-two counties, with most of these counties located in the Shenandoah Valley and southwest Virginia. While these counties had larger slave populations and generally remained under Confederate control, supporters of adding these counties insisted that they remained “western” counties and thus deserved to be included. Many supporters of the statehood movement believed this move to be a gimmick designed to stall and/or prevent the state’s founding. Delegates added

- nine southern counties while permitting seven Shenandoah Valley counties to vote on admission. See *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 3, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120361.html>, accessed July 14, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 7, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120761.html>, accessed July 14, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 9, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120961.html>, accessed July 14, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 10, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc121061.html>, accessed July 14, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 11, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc121161.html>, accessed July 14, 2015; Richard Orr Curry, *House Divided* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), 87; Scott MacKenzie, “Fifth Border State,” Ph.D. dissertation (2014), Auburn University, 191. The nine counties included were Boone, Logan, Mercer, Wyoming, Raleigh, McDowell, Greenbrier, Monroe, and Pocahontas. The Shenandoah Valley counties of Pendleton, Hardy, Hampshire, Morgan, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Frederick voted in favor of joining the new state except the last county. Delegates also disagreed on the state’s new name. Many northwestern delegates supported “Kanawha” as a means of unifying westerners and distancing themselves from eastern Virginians. Other delegates suggested that the state’s sectional history and usage of “western Virginia” for the previous decades made “West Virginia” a fitting rebuttal to eastern Virginians. See *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 3, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120361.html>, accessed July 14, 2015. The final vote was thirty in favor of “West Virginia,” nine for “Kanawha,” two each for “Allegheny” and “Western Virginia,” and one for “Augusta.” Delegates also approved the removal of *viva voce* voting. Republican Granville Davisson Hall later proclaimed that this “open” voting system perpetuated the “domination of the slave aristocracy.” Others, like Hancock delegate Joseph S. Pomeroy, believed that the *viva voce* facilitated the adoption of the secession ordinance, while Gordon Battelle asserted that oral voting permitted local elites to manipulate voters. Still, supporters of *viva voce* stressed the many virtues displayed during election season, with James Brown of Kanawha and Chapman Stuart defending that method. Despite these claims that *viva voce* inculcated independent behavior, convention delegates voted to implement the secret ballot. Granville Davisson Hall, *Rending of Virginia* (Chicago: Mayor & Miller, 1902), 70; *Wheeling (VA) Daily Intelligencer*, December 6, 1862, 2; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 5, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120561.html>, accessed July 14, 2015.
8. John J. Davis to Anna Kennedy, December 7, 1861, John J. Davis Family Papers, A&M 1946, Box 1, folder 2, West Virginia and Regional History Center. Davis also lamented the method of voting that delegates instituted, specifically the removal of *viva voce* voting. Republican Granville Davisson Hall later proclaimed that this “open” voting system perpetuated the “domination of the slave aristocracy.” Others, like Hancock delegate Joseph S. Pomeroy believed that the *viva voce* facilitated the adoption of the secession ordinance, while Gordon Battelle asserted that oral voting permitted local elites to manipulate voters. Still, supporters of *viva voce* stressed the many virtues displayed during election season, with James Brown of Kanawha and Chapman Stuart defending that method. Despite these claims that *viva voce* inculcated independent behavior, convention delegates voted to implement the secret ballot. Hall, *Rending of Virginia*, 70; *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 6, 1862, 2; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 5, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc120561.html>, accessed July 14, 2015.
  9. Chester Hubbard to William Hubbard, December 20, 1861, Hubbard Family Papers, A&M 805, West Virginia and Regional History Center.
  10. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 9, 1861, 2.
  11. Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey, December 16, 1861, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 10, Folder 7, item 361.
  12. Chester Hubbard to William Hubbard, 20 December 1861, Hubbard Family Papers. Prior to the December adjournment, some delegates had forced the convention to open a discussion regarding slavery. Boone County minister and delegate Robert Hagar introduced two resolutions concerning



the institution, including a provision for gradual emancipation. James Brown of Kanawha County convinced the convention to table both resolutions. Two weeks later, Gordon Battelle introduced a similar gradual emancipation clause but also included a prohibition on importing slaves into the state. The convention tabled Battelle’s motions, too. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, November 30, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc113061.html>, accessed July 15, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, December 14, 1861, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc121461.html>, accessed July 15, 2015.

13. *National Telegraph*, February 7, 1862, 2.
14. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, October 30, 1861, 3.
15. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, November 2, 1861, 1.
16. Rutherford Hayes to Sardis Bichard, December 19, 1861, *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Richard Hayes: Nineteenth President of the United States* 1, ed. Charles Richard Williams (Columbus, Ohio: F. J. Heer Printing Company, 1922), 163.
17. Hayes, diary entry, January 3, 1862, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 175
18. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, January 27, 1862, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc012762.html>, accessed July 15, 2015.
19. Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey, January 28, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 10, Folder 7, item 374.
20. Dering to Willey, February 5, 1862, quoted in Curry, *House Divided*, 91.
21. *Wellsburg (VA) Herald*, January 31, 1862, 2.
22. Battelle proposed to emancipate slaves born after 1870 after males reached twenty-eight years and females eighteen years of age. These changes meant that slavery would continue to exist well into the twentieth century.
23. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 12, 1862, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021262.html>, accessed July 16, 2015.
24. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 13, 1862, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021362.html>, accessed July 16, 2015.
25. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 8, 1862, 1.
26. *Wellsburg Herald*, March 14, 1862, 2.
27. Defenders of slavery often argued that African-American biological makeup permitted them to work in the South’s warm climate, while white men and women lacked this biological composition. Proslavery writers and theorists used this interpretation to justify slave labor and defend slavery from antislavery commentators and abolitionists in the North. Coneyer Bolton Valencius, *The Health of the Country: How Americans Understood Themselves and Their Land* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 238–240. Some West Virginians articulated similar arguments. One anonymous Preston County author stated that slavery “may well exist in the Tobacco, Hemp, Cotton, Rice and Sugar growing portions of our country, where the labour of the black race can be profitably employed and the slave better clothed, fed, and cared for. . . . My desire for a free State arise[s] out of the conviction that our climate and soil . . . are vastly better adapted to free than slave labour.” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, February 26, 1862, 1.
28. *Wellsburg Herald*, March 28, 1862, 1.
29. Dering to Willey, March 3, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 1, item 381.
30. William W. Warder to Evy Warder, February 13, 1862, William Wesley Warder Papers, A&M 1633, West Virginia and Regional History Center; 1860 U.S. Federal Census: Taylor, Virginia, Roll: M653\_1381, Page: 656, Image: 164, Family History Library Film: 805381, *Ancestry.com*, accessed August 7, 2015.
31. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 15, 1862, 2.
32. Chester Hubbard to William Hubbard, February 13, 1862, Hubbard Family Papers.
33. *Wellsburg Herald*, February 28, 1862, 2.
34. Curry, *House Divided*, 97. As Scott MacKenzie argues, though, wartime voting often produced skewed results, while lopsided margins in many northwestern counties suggest that free-state

- advocates employed coercive techniques to intimidate opponents or convince them to change their vote. MacKenzie, "Fifth Border State," 196. Despite the overwhelming margin in favor of gradual emancipation, some northwestern counties posted significant votes against the measure. In Monongalia, one hundred eighty-five voted against the clause, while forty-three opposed it in Brooke County. In Hancock, forty-four residents voted against it while seventy-one in Marshall also voted in the negative. In Ohio County, fifty-four opposed the measure. Though the vote in favor of gradual emancipation dwarfed those of their opponents, the continued presence of an electorate opposed to gradual emancipation reveals a contested political battleground and a measure of dissent that would continually contest measures against slavery. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, April 23, 1862, 2.
35. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, April 22, 1862, 2.
36. *Wellsburg Herald*, April 25, 1862, 2.
37. William M. Shinn to Waitman T. Willey, July 14, 1861, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 10, Folder 7, item 335.
38. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 5, 1862, 1.
39. *Wellsburg Herald*, April 25, 1862, 2. This interpretation runs counter to other interpretations offered by other historians. Granville Davisson Hall proclaimed that the vote demonstrated that West Virginians "were ready to accept emancipation—eager to do so—as giving their new State its fitting status at home." Hall, *Rending of Virginia*, 507. Richard Curry declared the vote a "turning point in the history of statehood politics," igniting residents' latent and long-held antislavery sentiment. Curry, *House Divided*, 97. For a similar interpretation, see Matthew Tyler Foulds, "Enemies of the State: Methodists, Secession, and the Civil War in Western Virginia," (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2012), 297–298.
40. Arthur I. Boreman to Francis H. Pierpont, July 30, 1862, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers, A&M 9, Box 3, Folder 3, West Virginia and Regional History Center.
41. Chester Hubbard to William Hubbard, September 26, 1861, Hubbard Family Papers.
42. Peter G. Van Winkle to Waitman T. Willey, June 10, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 1, item 411.
43. Van Winkle to Willey, June 27, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 422.
44. John J. Davis to Anna Kennedy, May 11, 1862, reprinted in Gerald P. Ham, ed., "The Mind of a Copperhead: Letters of John J. Davis on the Secession Crisis and Statehood Politics in Western Virginia, 1860–1862," *West Virginia History* 24 (January 1963): 105.
45. John J. Davis to Anna Kennedy, May 19, 1862, reprinted in Ham, "The Mind of a Copperhead," 105-106.
46. *National Telegraph*, May 9, 1862, 2. For example, see *Wellsburg Herald*, June 27, 1862, 2.
47. *National Telegraph*, June 13, 1862, 2.
48. Francis Pierpont to Abraham Lincoln, March 14, 1862, Francis Harrison Pierpont Letters to Abraham Lincoln, A&M 1034, West Virginia and Regional History Center.
49. J. Marshall Hagans to Waitman T. Willey, June 21, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 419; 1860 U.S. Federal Census: District 2, Monongalia, Virginia, Roll: M653 1364, Page: 74, Image: 84, Family History Library Film: 805364, *Ancestry.com*, accessed July 23, 2015.
50. Harrison Hagans to Waitman T. Willey, May 2, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 1, item 400.
51. *National Telegraph*, May 9, 1862, 2, and June 13, 1862, 2.
52. See "Governor Pierpont's Address to the Reorganized Government of Virginia, May 6, 1862," A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, West Virginia Archives & History, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/pierpont050662.html>, accessed July 23, 2015; "Act of the Reorganized Government of Virginia Granting Permission for Creation of New State," A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, West Virginia Archives & History, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/rgov051362.html>, accessed July 23, 2015; Waitman T. Willey,

*Speech of Hon. W. T. Willey, Delivered in the United States Senate, May 29, 1862, On Presenting the Memorial of the Legislature of Virginia, requesting the consent of Congress to the erection of a new state within the jurisdiction of that State, to be called “West Virginia”* (Washington, D.C.: Scammell & Co., 1862).

53. The emancipation clause mandated that all slaves born on or after July 4, 1863, would be free. The fifteen counties included in Carlile’s amended bill were Berkeley, Jefferson, Clark, Frederick, Warren, Page, Shenandoah, Rockingham, Augusta, Highland, Bath, Rockbridge, Botetourt, Craig, and Alleghany.
54. Dering to Willey, June 27, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 425. John Carlile’s actions drew the ire of many residents, who labeled him a traitor and unresponsive to his constituents’ demands. See *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*; July 29, 1862, 2, and August 12, 1862, 1.
55. Moses Tichenell to Waitman T. Willey, June 28, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 429; 1860 U.S. Federal Census: Triadelphia, Ohio, Virginia, Roll: M653\_1368, Page: 493, Image: 505, Family History Library Film: 805368, *Ancestry.com*, accessed July 24, 2015.
56. Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner emerged as a vocal opponent of the statehood bill. He opposed any type of gradual emancipation in regards to West Virginia’s slave population and instead advocated that all slaves within the state’s original proposed limits be immediately freed on July 4, 1863. “U.S. Senate Debate on West Virginia Statehood, June 26, 1862,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ussenatedebate062662.html>, accessed July 24, 2015. Willey doubted the efficacy of such a proposal, fearful that the strong secession sentiment still within the proposed state would increase should slaves be immediately freed. See “U.S. Senate Debate on West Virginia Statehood, July 1, 1862,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ussenatedebate070162.html>, accessed July 24, 2015; “U.S. Senate Debate on West Virginia Statehood, July 14, 1862,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ussenatedebate071462a.html>, accessed July 26, 2015.
57. Stealey, *West Virginia’s Civil War-Era Constitution*, 105. Willey also successfully removed the additional counties included in the committee’s bill. As Richard Curry notes, twenty of the twenty-three votes cast for West Virginia’s admission came from Republicans. Four radical Republicans and thirteen conservative senators joined in opposition to statehood. Curry, *House Divided*, 104.
58. “U.S. House of Representatives Debate on West Virginia statehood, December 9, 1862,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ushousedebate120962.html>, accessed July 26, 2015.
59. “U.S. House of Representatives Debate on West Virginia statehood, December 10, 1862,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ushousedebate121062.html>, accessed July 26, 2015. Opposition for West Virginia’s admission from Virginia representatives existed. Joseph E. Segar, a Virginia Unionist representing the Eastern Shore, maintained that West Virginians had adopted a “pro-slavery constitution,” but Congress imposed an “anti-slavery one” for voters to accept or reject. Segar implored Congress to allow West Virginians to decide the institution’s future in its borders. Segar also feared that Unionists in eastern Virginia would be vulnerable to Confederate reprisals once the Restored Government of Virginia in Wheeling turned into the West Virginia state government. Finally, Segar appealed to Virginia’s “rich cluster of glorious memories and associations,” denouncing the attempt to create two Virginias and sully the state’s history.
60. “Opinions of Lincoln’s Cabinet on the Constitutionality of West Virginia,” West Virginia Archives & History, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cabinetopinions.html>, accessed July 26, 2015.
61. “Opinion of Abraham Lincoln on the Admission of West Virginia,” A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/lincolnopinion.html>, accessed July 26, 2015. Virginia Gov. Francis Pierpont reminded Lincoln that denying West

- Virginia's admission would imperil the Union cause in the region. West Virginians' "failure" to secure a new state "will ruin the Union," he warned, a foreboding prospect considering that residents' "sentiment" for the Union and for a new state "have become identical." "If one is struck down I don't know what is become of the other." Henry Dering agreed with Pierpont, declaring that a Lincoln veto "would turn all Western Va. into rebels" and "he would not have a friend in all Western Va." Francis Pierpont to Abraham Lincoln, December 20, 1862, and December 30, 1862, Francis Harrison Pierpont Letters to Abraham Lincoln, A&M 1034; Dering to Willey, December 16, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 452.
62. John J. Davis lamented the "degrading terms" for statehood that West Virginia proposed to the president. John J. Davis to Anna Kennedy, December 20, 1862, John J. Davis Family Papers, A&M 1946, Box 1, Folder 4.
63. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 23, 1863, 2.
64. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 11, 1862, 3.
65. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, August 20, 1862, 2.
66. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 15, 1862, 2.
67. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, August 23, 1862, 2.
68. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, January 17, 1863, 2.
69. Dering to Willey, February 25, 1863, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 3, item 492.
70. Willey, *Address of Hon. Waitman T. Willey, Delivered before the Constitutional Convention of West Virginia, in the City of Wheeling, on the 12th day of February, 1863, in compliance with a Resolution of that body, inviting him to do so* (Wheeling: n.p., 1863), 8.
71. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 23, 1863, 2.
72. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, August 14, 1862, 3.
73. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, February 2, 1863, 2.
74. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, September 3, 1862, 1.
75. *National Telegraph*, August 29, 1862, 2.
76. *Daily Press* (Wheeling, Virginia), January 24, 1863, 2.
77. *National Telegraph*, September 12, 1862, 2.
78. Arthur I. Boreman to Francis Pierpont, February 27, 1863, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers, A&M 9, Box 3, Folder 6.
79. E. C. Moderwell to Waitman T. Willey, July 24, 1862, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 2, item 439. See also John Carlile, *Remarks of John S. Carlile, of Virginia, at the Mass Convention, at Indianapolis, on the 30th day of July, 1862* (Washington, D.C.: Henry Polkinhorn, Steam Book and Job Printer, 1862). In Indianapolis, Carlile derided Republicans for turning the war for the Union into a war to abolish slavery and institute racial equality. He further suggested that emancipation would trigger a demographic and social crisis that would overwhelm state and local governments.
80. *National Telegraph*, September 26, 1862, 2.
81. *Daily Press*, February 19, 1863, 2.
82. Arthur I. Boreman to Francis Pierpont, February 27, 1863, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers, A&M 9, Box 3, Folder 6.
83. *National Telegraph*, December 5, 1862, 2.
84. *National Telegraph*, October 24, 1862, 2. As James McPherson and James Hogue argue, though, conservatives poorly misread the election results. Democrats gained seats in traditionally Democratic districts across the lower North, while Republicans gained five seats in the Senate and suffered a small net loss of seats in the House of Representatives. Republicans swept New England, the upper North, the two Pacific states, and the border states. James M. McPherson and James K. Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 4th ed., 2010), 320.
85. "A Proclamation on the Suspension of *Habeas Corpus*, 1862," Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, [http://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/content-images/06099p1\\_0](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/content-images/06099p1_0).

*.jpg*, accessed July 29, 2015.

86. *Guerilla*, October 3, 1862, 2. The *Guerilla* was a Confederate military camp newspaper published when Southern troops occupied Charleston.
87. *Daily Press*, January 5, 1863, 4.
88. *Daily Press*, February 27, 1863, 2.
89. *Morgantown (VA) Monitor*, February 21, 1863, 2.
90. *Daily Press*, March 9, 1863, 2.
91. John J. Davis to Anna Kennedy, December 7, 1862, John J. Davis Family Papers, A&M 1946, Box 1, Folder 4.
92. *Daily Press*, March 16, 1863, 2.
93. *Clarksburg Patriot*, March 20, 1863, 2.
94. *Daily Press*, March 11, 1863, 2.
95. *National Telegraph*, November 21, 1862, 2.
96. *National Telegraph*, November 7, 1862, 2.
97. *Daily Press*, February 19, 1863, 2.
98. *Daily Press*, February 19, 1863, 2.
99. Willey, *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia, February 12, 1863*, 1.
100. *Wellsburg Herald*, June 20, 1862, 2.
101. *Wellsburg Herald*, February 13, 1863, 2.
102. Willey, *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia, February 12, 1863*, 6.
103. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 19, 1863, 1.
104. Willey, *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia, February 12, 1863*, 10. See, for example, William P. Willey to Waitman T. Willey, January 31, 1863, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 3, item 482.
105. *Wellsburg Herald*, February 13, 1863, 2.
106. *Wellsburg Herald*, October 24, 1862, 2.
107. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 18, 1862, 1, and February 10, 1863, 1.
108. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 19, 1863, 1.
109. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, January 14, 1863, 1.
110. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 12, 1863, 1.
111. Lott, “Blackface and Blackness,” 13. For example, see *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 13, 1863, 3, and March 14, 1863, 2.
112. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, January 28, 1863, 1.
113. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, July 31, 1862, 1.
114. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, February 10, 1863, 2. Such restrictions may have included barring African Americans from carrying a gun, testifying against whites in court, and serving on juries or voting.
115. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 12, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021263.htm>, accessed July 31, 2015.
116. *Fairmont (VA) National*, April 4, 1863, 2.
117. *Wellsburg Herald*, September 26, 1862, 2.
118. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, March 14, 1863, 2. Not all statehood supporters supported the Emancipation Proclamation, however. Chester Hubbard considered the proclamation “as the worst error he [Lincoln] has made, wholly ineffective for any good purpose, and productive of all evil and only evil.” Still, Hubbard stated, “I stand by the administration.” Chester Hubbard to William Hubbard, November 11, 1862, Hubbard Family Papers.
119. Arthur I. Boreman to Francis Pierpont, February 27, 1863, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers, A&M 9, Box 3, Folder 6.
120. Jacob B. Blair to Waitman T. Willey, February 14, 1863, Charles H. Ambler Collection, A&M 122, Box 11, Folder 3, item 486; 1860 U.S. Federal Census: Parkersburg, Wood, Virginia, Roll: M653\_1384, Page: 507, Image: 515, Family History Library Film: 805384, *Ancestry.com*, accessed July 31, 2015.

121. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 16, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021663.html>, accessed July 31, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 14, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021463.html>, accessed July 31, 2015.
122. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 17, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021763.html>, accessed July 31, 2015. Delegates defeated Wheat's proposal, twenty-eight to twenty-six, while Brown's proposal failed to garner much support.
123. *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 17, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc021763.html>, accessed July 31, 2015; *Constitutional Convention of West Virginia*, February 20, 1863, <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/cc022063.html>, accessed July 31, 2015.
124. Curry, *House Divided*, 150–151. Opponents of the statehood movement instructed others opposed to West Virginia's creation to abstain from voting to protest what they considered the antidemocratic means used by supporters to force residents to accept statehood, including intimidation and ostracism at the polls.
125. Curry, *House Divided*, 129.
126. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, April 8, 1863, 2.
127. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, April 9, 1863, 2. Early West Virginian historians likewise viewed the results favorably. Granville Davisson Hall believed that the vote placed the state on the "irresistible march" toward slavery's abolition. Charles Ambler and Festus P. Summers considered West Virginia's "admission . . . a triumph for Abolitionists," as residents finally inaugurated a gradual emancipation process to remove slaves from the state. More recent historians, notably Sean Wilentz, William W. Freehling, William Link, and Stephanie McCurry, echo similar claims. These historians emphasize the fatal struggle between African-American bondage and democracy, characterizing Southerners' attempts to promote equilibrium between the two institutions as ill-fated and myopic. West Virginia's history strengthens that interpretation. Mountaineers, cognizant of slavery's incongruity with "modern" democratic principles, demanded liberation from eastern oligarchs and their peculiar institution. The Civil War offered West Virginians the opportunity to emancipate themselves from such tyranny, a microcosm of the national struggle. Hall, *Rending of Virginia*, 507; Ambler and Summers, *West Virginia: The Mountain State* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1940), 248; Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005); Freehling, *Road to Disunion, vol. 1: Secessionists at Bay, 1776–1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Freehling, *Road to Disunion, vol. 2: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854–1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Link, *Roots of Secession*; Link, "'This Bastard New Virginia'"; McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

**About the Author:** Adam Zucconi, who grew up in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, is an assistant professor of history at the Richard Bland College of William and Mary. He holds a Ph.D. from West Virginia University, where he wrote his dissertation on West Virginia during the Civil War. The recipient of his college's Outstanding Professor Award, Dr. Zucconi likes to teach courses on the Civil War and Reconstruction, and his research interests include nineteenth century politics and political culture, slavery, and West Virginia and Virginia history.