



### **Road to Statehood: Timeline to Statehood**

**Objective: Students will research and create a timeline of key events in the West Virginia Statehood movement.**

#### **Grade Level and Subject**

Eighth Grade WV Studies

(May also be used in 5<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies to meet CSO requirement SS.5.WV.4)

#### **Time Needed to Complete Lesson**

Two 50 minute class periods

#### **Strategic Vocabulary**

Timeline: A list of events in the order that they occurred

Sequence: The order in which things happen

Ordinance: A law

Convention: A meeting

#### **Guiding Questions**

What were the key events leading to WV becoming a state?

What is the sequence of events that led to West Virginia statehood?

## **List of Materials Needed**

DVD or online access to the WVPBS video *Road to Statehood* <http://www.wvpublic.org>

Handout of Important Events in the Statehood Movement

Computers/tablets/smartphones with internet access if possible

Pencil, colored pencils or markers

One sheet of 8 ½ by 11 inch plain white paper for each student

Timeline worksheet or blank paper to create the timeline

Textbook - West Virginia 150 Years of Statehood

## **Text Set File and Handouts**

If possible copy and paste the links below to a class website so students can point and click instead of having to type URL addresses. Copies of some materials found at these websites are included in the appendix of this lesson for those students/classes that do not have internet access.

## Important Events in the Statehood Movement

1. Philippi Races  
<http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1846>
2. Carlile and Willey become United States Senators  
[http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil\\_War\\_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil_War_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm)
3. Constitutional Convention  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood11.html>
4. West Virginia's Constitution was approved  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood11.html>
5. West Virginia's statehood bill was signed  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood14.html>
6. Clarksburg Convention  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood04.html>
7. West Virginia's first governor was appointed  
<http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/614>
8. First Wheeling Convention  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood05.html>
9. Virginia voters approve the Ordinance to Secede  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood06.html>
10. West Virginia officially became a state  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood16.html>
11. Abraham Lincoln becomes President  
[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb\\_civil\\_lincoln2\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb_civil_lincoln2_1.html)
12. Second Wheeling Convention  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood12.html>
13. US Congress debated the West Virginia statehood bill  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood13.html>
14. Great Gold Robbery  
[http://www.mystatehistory.com/wv\\_2013\\_demo/book/ch\\_12\\_1.pdf](http://www.mystatehistory.com/wv_2013_demo/book/ch_12_1.pdf)  
or textbook WV 150 Years of Statehood p. 461

## Lesson Activities with Links to Websites

1. Prior to completing this activity view the WVPBS DVD, *The Road to Statehood*, or access the video online at <http://www.wvpublic.org>
2. This lesson includes fourteen events to be researched.
3. Divide students into pairs or groups accordingly. (Groups of 3 work best for the One Moment in Time activity below.)
4. Assign each group one event from the handout “Important Dates in the Statehood Movement”. Have groups research the date and important information about each event using their textbook and the link provided. Students may use additional materials as well and more links are provided within the websites listed in the handout.
5. Complete the Moment In Time Activity below:
  - a. Provide each group with a sheet of plain white paper. Instruct each group to fold paper into thirds, like a pamphlet, and reopen. Turn the paper so there are 3 sections top, middle, and bottom.
  - b. Assign group roles – a different person should complete each section of the paper.
  - c. In the top section students write the date and location of the event.
  - d. In the middle section students draw and color a picture of the event as if they were actually there.
  - e. In the bottom section students write a brief summary of the event.
6. On the wall or whiteboard, in chronological order, one student from each group should hang the moment in time sheets.
7. Each student should copy the entire timeline on his/her paper.
8. After completing the timeline, each student will choose the one event he/she feels is most important in the West Virginia statehood movement and write an essay justifying his/her belief. Students must cite two sources supporting his/her opinion.

## Appendix

Timeline Answer key for Important Dates in the Statehood Movement

Timeline template

Essay Rubric

Copies of materials from the identified websites

## NextGen CSOs for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade WV Studies

SS.8.H.CL3.1 explain the effect of key events leading to Western Virginia’s separation from Virginia after secession (e.g., First and Second Wheeling Conventions and John Brown’s Raid).

SS.8.H.CL3.2 describe the moral, ethical and legal tensions that led to the creation of the new state of West Virginia and how these tensions were resolved (e.g., Virginia vs. West Virginia 1871).

SS.8.H.CL3.3 compare and contrast the military strategies of the North and South with regard to specific events and geographic locations in West Virginia (e.g., the Battle of Philippi, Rich Mountain, Droop Mountain, Battle of Scary Creek and Battle of Carnifex Ferry).

## NextGen Literacy Standards

SS.6-8.L.2 determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

SS.6-8.L.7 integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos or maps) with other information in print and digital texts

SS.6-8.L.11 write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

- introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- use words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.
- establish and maintain a formal style.
- provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

SS.6-8.L.13 produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

## Author and e-mail

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**An electronic copy of this lesson plan and the WVPBS video Road to Statehood can be found at <http://www.wvpublic.org>. Under the Education tab click on Learning Media and search for “Road to Statehood”.**

## Appendix

### Timeline **Answer key** for Important Dates in the Statehood Movement

#### 1860

Nov. Presidential election

[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb\\_civil\\_lincoln2\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb_civil_lincoln2_1.html)

#### 1861

March 4 Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated

[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb\\_civil\\_lincoln2\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb_civil_lincoln2_1.html)

April 17 Virginia passed the Ordinance of Secession

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood06.html>

April 22 Clarksburg Convention held

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood04.html>

May 13-15 First Wheeling Convention

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood05.html>

May 23 Virginia voters pass the Ordinance of Secession

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood06.html>

June 3 Philippi Races

<http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1846>

June 11 -25 Second Wheeling Convention held where the Restored Government of Virginia was established and Francis Pierpont was elected Governor

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood12.html>

June 30 Gold robbery

[http://www.mystatehistory.com/wv\\_2013\\_demo/book/ch\\_12\\_1.pdf](http://www.mystatehistory.com/wv_2013_demo/book/ch_12_1.pdf)

or textbook WV 150 Years of Statehood p. 461

July 13 Carlile and Willey sworn in as United States Senators

[http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil\\_War\\_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil_War_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm)

#### 1862

Feb. 18 The delegates approved the first West Virginia constitution.

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood11.html>

April 3 West Virginia voters approved the constitution which was then sent to the United States Congress

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood11.html>

July- Dec. The West Virginia Statehood bill passed by the United States Congress  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood13.html>

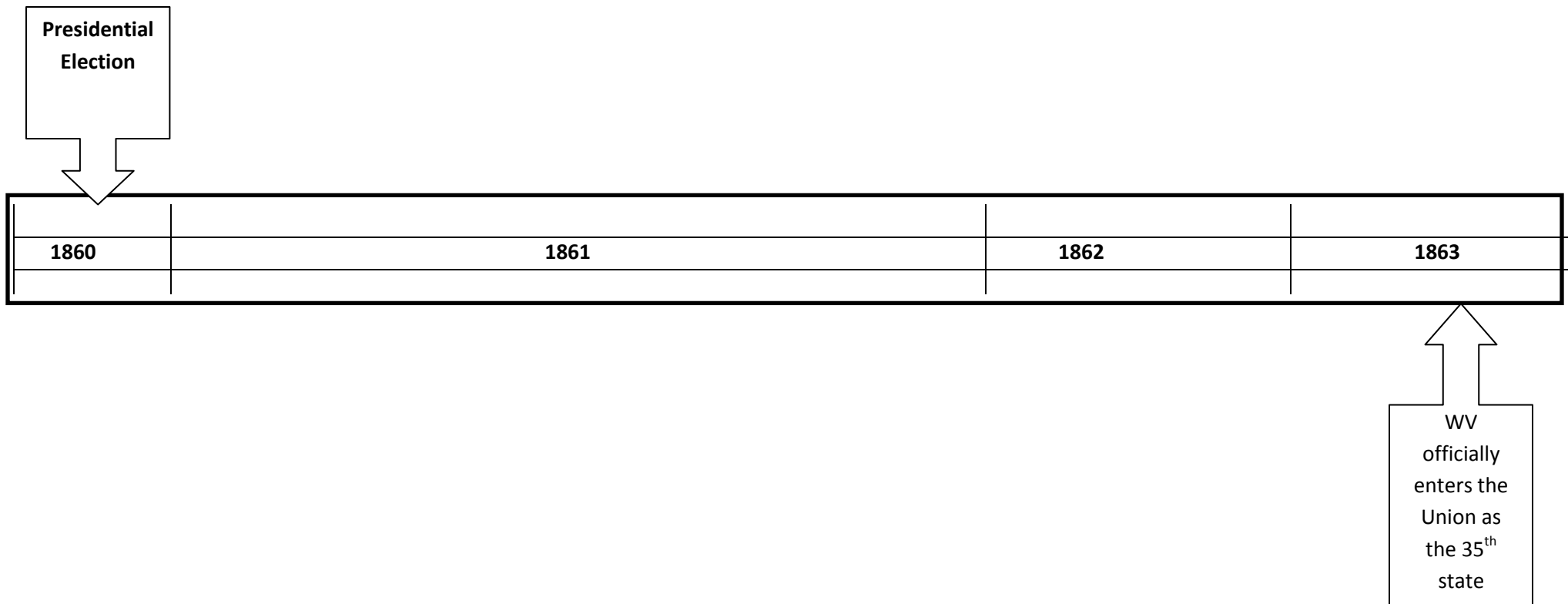
December 31 President Lincoln signed the statehood bill  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood14.html>

## **1863**

May 28 Arthur Boreman was appointed the first of West Virginia Governor  
<http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/614>

June 20 West Virginia officially became the 35th state in the Union  
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood16.html>

# Timeline of WV Statehood



*Road to Statehood* Timeline **Essay** Rubric

Criteria	10 Exceeds expectation	7 Meets expectations	4 Below expectations	0 Does not meet expectations
Student introduces the topic in a clear and interesting fashion.				
The student expresses a firm opinion.				
The student supports his/her opinion with two forms of evidence.				
Essay includes a concluding statement that restates the expressed opinion.				
Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are accurate				
Assignment is neatly typed or handwritten				
Additional Comments:				

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

## Arthur Ingraham Boreman



Arthur Ingraham (also spelled “Ingram”) Boreman (July 24, 1823-April 19, 1896) was West Virginia’s first governor. He was born in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, and moved with his family to Middlebourne, Tyler County, while still an infant. Except for a brief period during which the family lived in Marshall County, he resided in Middlebourne for a decade and a half and received his schooling there. Then he studied law under the tutelage of an older brother and brother-in-law, James McNeill Stephenson, and was admitted to the bar in 1845. Shortly thereafter, Boreman moved to Parkersburg, the home of the Stephensons.

Parkersburg would remain Boreman’s hometown for the remainder of his life. From there he was first elected to public office in 1855, when he was sent as a Whig to the General Assembly in Richmond. He served until Virginia’s secession from the United States on April 17, 1861.

The decade of the 1860s was the most eventful of Boreman’s political life. After Virginia’s secession from the United States, he visited U.S. military officials in Cincinnati to seek protection for Unionists living in Parkersburg. In June 1861, he was elected president of the Second Wheeling Convention, which under his leadership voted to establish the Reorganized Government of Virginia, loyal to the Union and supplanting the secessionist government in Richmond. It was from Reorganized Virginia that Boreman and others secured the necessary constitutional approval for the creation of the state of West Virginia.

In October 1861, Boreman was elected to a circuit judgeship. On May 6–7, 1863, he attended the Constitutional Union Party Convention in Parkersburg and became its nominee to be governor of the new state. On May 28, 1863, he was elected to a two-year term without opposition. In his inaugural address in Wheeling on June 20, Governor Boreman asserted that he would assist in the founding of a system of public education throughout the state that would provide all children, regardless of economic level, schooling to prepare them for respectable positions in society. He backed his words with action during the next six years, during which he was reelected two times.

A public school system was established, and with the aid of the Morrill Act, which had been enacted by the federal government in 1862, West Virginia University was created on February 7, 1867.

Boreman's primary business during the first 22 months of his governorship was steering the infant state through the remainder of the Civil War. It was not an easy task. Not everyone living within West Virginia's boundaries was loyal to the new state. Fifteen southern and central counties had not participated in the state's first election, and in an effort to retain control for the Radical Republicans, Boreman secured the passage of the voters' test oath law in February 1865. This divisive legislation denied the right to vote, to hold political office, to practice law, to teach, and to sue to those persons who could not prove their present and past loyalty to the Union. Such oaths effectively disenfranchised the many ex- Confederates in the new state, who were overwhelmingly Democrats. Thus the Republicans were assured of a majority in West Virginia in the first years after the war.

Governor Boreman found time to marry in 1864, wedding Laurane Tanner Bullock, a Wheeling widow and mother of two sons. The ceremony was performed by the Reverend Alexander Martin, who in 1867 became West Virginia University's first president. Boreman resigned as governor on February 26, 1869, to be elected to the U.S. Senate by the state legislature.

As a senator and as a Republican, Boreman supported the ratification of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing the right to vote regardless of race. Upon receiving word of its ratification, he telegraphed Robert W. Simmons, the leader of the black community in Parkersburg, and a celebration was staged in that city in 1870. Five years later, Boreman's term as senator ended, and he returned to the private practice of law in his hometown. In 1884, he organized a relief effort to assist the victims of a devastating Ohio River flood. In 1888, he was once again elected to a circuit judgeship, a post he would hold until his death. His funeral was held in Parkersburg's Methodist Episcopal Church, North, where he had been a lay leader in the congregation. Boreman was survived by his wife, their two daughters, and two stepsons. He was buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Parkersburg.

Read Gov. Boreman's inaugural address.

*This Article was written by Bernard L. Allen*

*Last Revised on September 26, 2012*

## Battle of Philippi



With the beginning of the [Civil War](#), both the North and South saw the mountains of Western Virginia as a strategically vital area. The region was seen as the source of thousands of tough recruits and of essential raw materials, an important staging area for attacks into the heartland of their opponents, and it was traversed by the [Baltimore & Ohio Railroad](#), one of only two east-west railroads in the country at that time.

When Confederate troops threatened the B&O at Grafton, the federal government quickly moved troops into the area. Just before dawn on June 3, 1861, the first land battle of the Civil War involving organized troops took place at Philippi, about 15 miles south of Grafton. Some 3,000 federal troops under the general command of Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan and the immediate command of Col. Benjamin F. Kelley and Col. Ebenezer Dumont drove about 800 Confederates under Col. George A. Porterfield from the town. The outnumbered Rebels retreated so briskly that the battle was sometimes humorously referred to as the “Philippi Races.” While no one was killed in the brief encounter, Kelley was severely wounded and two Confederates suffered leg wounds, necessitating the first amputations of the Civil War. One of the amputees was Virginia cavalryman James Hanger. He later founded Hanger Prosthetics, still a major manufacturer of artificial limbs.

According to historian Mark Snell, “Philippi was a trifling tactical affair, but it had significant strategic consequences, the most important of which was to deprive the Confederacy of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.” Snell further notes that the B&O “became the most important east-west transportation artery in the Union.”

Politically, the Northern victory stiffened Unionist resolve in Western Virginia. Within three weeks, the first Wheeling Convention voted to nullify the Virginia ordinance of secession, declared the offices of the state government at Richmond vacated, and named Francis H. Pierpont governor of the “restored” government of Virginia. The victory also played an important part in General McClellan’s meteoric rise to the command of the Army of the Potomac.

The federal strategy at Philippi included what was probably the first employment of the railroad to effect the convergence of divergent forces upon an enemy in world history.

*This Article was written by [James W. Daddysman](#)*

*Last Revised on September 27, 2012*

# The Great Gold Robbery

By the spring of 1861, the Restored Government of the State of Virginia was in place in Wheeling, and President Lincoln and the United States Congress had recognized it as the official government of the State of Virginia. The new government, however, lacked an important ingredient—it had no money to operate.

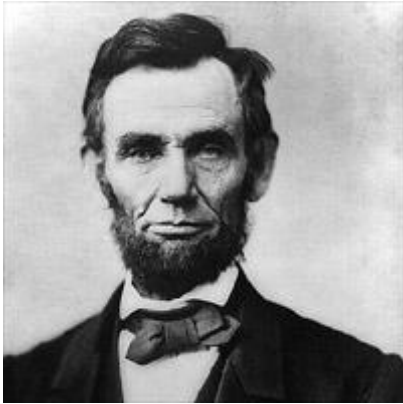
Presley Hale, who attended the Second Wheeling Convention, approached Governor Francis Pierpont with a unique idea to solve the financial crisis. Hale, who lived in Weston (Lewis County), told the governor that there was \$27,000 in gold in a bank in his hometown. Before Virginia seceded from the Union, the money had been sent to Weston by Virginia's government in Richmond to pay workers who were building the Trans-Allegheny Asylum for the Insane (commonly called the Weston State Hospital). Hale urged Pierpont to seize the money and use it for the Restored Government of the State of Virginia. Pierpont readily agreed and immediately asked Union General George McClellan, who was in Grafton at the time, to acquire the gold. McClellan, in turn, ordered Colonel Erastus Tyler and his Seventh Ohio Infantry to confiscate the gold and send it to Governor Pierpont in Wheeling. Tyler arrived in Weston early in the morning of

June 30. He marched his troops down the town's main street as a band played "The Star-Spangled Banner." Awakened by the commotion, townspeople (who were still in their bedclothes) ran into the street to see what was happening.

The troops marched straight to the house where the bank occupied three rooms on the first floor. Robert McCandlish, the bank's cashier, had a room on the second floor. Awakened by loud knocking, McCandlish opened the door to find himself facing a regiment of Union soldiers. Colonel Tyler ordered him to turn over the \$27,000 immediately. McCandlish asked if some money could be kept to pay the workers, as it was intended, but his request was denied. The Union troops took it all.

The money, which was in the bank's vault, was in leather pouches, and each of the twenty-seven pouches contained \$1,000. The money was first taken to the construction site of the hospital where the soldiers set up a camp. From there, it was taken under guard by wagon to Clarksburg, where it was

transferred to a train that took it to Wheeling. In Wheeling, the Reorganized Government used the money to establish a treasury to carry out its business. Without the “stolen” gold from Weston, the Wheeling government might not have succeeded.



The man of the hour, the new President, Abraham Lincoln

## **Abraham Lincoln's Inauguration**

**March 4, 1861**

Monday, March 4, 1861, was a big day for Abraham Lincoln and for America. That morning, he and outgoing President James Buchanan left the Willard Hotel, which is nearby the White House, in a horse-drawn carriage bound for the Capitol. Shortly after 1 p.m., Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Roger B. Taney administered the presidential oath of office. With the swearing of his official vows, Lincoln became the 16th president of the United States. His speech was a very important one because he would be speaking not only as the new president but also as the leader of a nation in crisis. Lincoln was well prepared. He had sought lots of help to deliver the right message in his inaugural address.

## **Abraham Lincoln's Inauguration**

**March 4, 1861**

For guidance and inspiration while composing his inaugural address, Lincoln turned to historical documents. All of them were concerned with states' rights. Lincoln took office just months after seven Southern states had seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. The Confederacy opposed the new leader's policy against the expansion of slavery to new states and had exercised what they viewed as their right to secede.

Lincoln sent drafts of his speech to his closest political advisers for feedback. William H. Seward, the future secretary of state, contributed ideas to several of the final passages, including the famous conclusion, "The mystic chords of memory . . . will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

## **Abraham Lincoln's Inauguration**

**March 4, 1861**

Lincoln's inaugural address was stirring. He appealed for the preservation of the Union. To retain his support in the North without further alienating the South, he called for compromise. He promised he would not initiate force to maintain the Union or interfere with slavery in the states in which it already existed. Soon after, Lincoln received word that Fort Sumter, located in Charleston harbor, South Carolina, would have to be resupplied. The situation presented a problem, as tensions between the North and the South were very high. Resupplying the fort might inflame the situation because it was located in a slave-holding state. Yet Lincoln, in his inaugural address, had promised that the Union would not give up control of federal territory, such as Fort Sumter. The fort was resupplied, and Lincoln refused to evacuate it. The Confederates attacked the fort on April 12, 1861. The Civil War had begun, and President Lincoln was thrust into the middle of one of this country's greatest crises.

[http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil\\_War\\_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Civil_War_VAFirstCivilWarSen.htm)

### **Election of Virginia's First Civil War Senators**

When Virginia seceded from the Union in April 1861, a pro-Union countermovement in the northwestern part of the state sought to keep Virginia loyal to the Union and to maintain representation within the federal government. Claiming that secession from the Union was not lawful, a restored "rump" government organized in Wheeling under the governorship of Francis Pierpont, and claimed jurisdiction over the whole state. The rump Virginia general assembly elected two new United States senators to replace the two who had withdrawn in support of the Confederacy.

With the seating of Virginia senators Waitman T. Willey and John S. Carlile on July 13, 1861, the Senate affirmed the validity of the restored pro-Union government in Virginia. "The loyal men of Virginia have elected a legislature and seek representation in the Congress of the United States," argued Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois in a spirited debate over seating the two men. "They are entitled to representation here." In the Senate, Willey and Carlile advocated statehood efforts by the northwestern portion of Virginia, which led to the formation of the state of West Virginia in 1863.

## **Chapter Four** **Clarksburg Convention**

**April 22, 1861**

Throughout western Virginia, citizens met in support of or opposition to the action taken by the delegates at the Richmond Convention. The majority of westerners opposed the Ordinance of Secession. In response to a call issued two days prior, on Monday, April 22, 1861, nearly twelve hundred Harrison County citizens gathered at the courthouse in Clarksburg to respond to the Ordinance of Secession. Those in attendance criticized the actions taken by the Virginia government, and resolutions submitted by John Carlile called for delegates from all of northwestern Virginia to gather at Wheeling on May 13 for a larger convention.

### **Primary Documents:**

[Resolutions Adopted at the Clarksburg Convention](#)  
[Mayor's Proclamation, Wheeling, 19 April 1861 \(Wheeling Artficial Collection, Ms2006-044\)](#)  
[Meeting in Guyandotte, 20 April 1861](#)  
[Broadside for Union Rally in Fairmont, 29 April 1861](#)



John Carlile

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*A State of Convenience*

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## **Chapter Five** **First Wheeling Convention**

**May 13-15, 1861**

On May 13, 1861, delegates from twenty-seven western Virginia counties assembled at Washington Hall in Wheeling to consider responsive action to the Ordinance of Secession. William B. Zinn of Preston County was appointed temporary chairman of the convention, and George Latham of Taylor County was selected as temporary secretary.



George Latham



General John Jay Jackson

An immediate debate ensued over which delegates should be allowed to participate in the proceedings. General John Jay Jackson of Wood County favored the seating of all attendees from northwestern Virginia, but John Carlile urged that the convention be "composed only of gentlemen who come clothed with the authority conferred upon them by the people of their counties when they appointed them." Finally, a proposal by [Chester D. Hubbard](#) of Ohio County to create a committee on representation and permanent organization was adopted, ending the debate.

After this issue was resolved, the delegates focused on the proper response to the crisis. General Jackson, Waitman Willey, and most of the other delegates believed that any steps taken prior to the May 23 statewide vote on the Ordinance of Secession would be premature and "altogether unwise." Others, however, including John Carlile, sought immediate action. "Let us act," Carlile stated, "let us repudiate these monstrous usurpations; let us show our loyalty to Virginia and the Union; and let us maintain ourselves in the Union at every hazard. It is useless to cry peace when there is no peace; and I for one will repeat what was said by one of Virginia's noblest sons and greatest statesmen, 'Give me liberty or give me death!'"



John Carlile

On May 14, John Carlile proposed a resolution for the creation of the new state of New Virginia. Opponents deemed this proposal revolutionary, and the majority of the delegates supported resolutions offered by the Committee on State and Federal Resolutions, which recommended that if the people of Virginia approved the Ordinance of Secession on May 23, western Virginians would elect delegates to a Second Wheeling Convention to begin on June 11, 1861.



Proposed State of New Virginia

## Primary Documents:

[Proceedings of the First Wheeling Convention](#)  
[Delegates to the First Wheeling Convention](#)  
["Recollections and Narrative \[sic\] of a Member of the May Convention of 1861..."](#)

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*A State of Convenience*

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## **Chapter Six** **Ratification of the Ordinance of Secession**

The Ordinance of Secession was approved by the voters of Virginia on May 23, 1861. This appears to have been viewed as merely a technicality, since the government of Virginia had proceeded to align itself with the Confederacy and prepare for war. During the month following the passage of the ordinance by the delegates at the Richmond Convention, citizens of western Virginia gathered in communities and voiced their opposition to or support for the decision to leave the Union. When Virginia Governor John Letcher announced that the ordinance had been ratified by the citizens of Virginia by a vote of 125,950 to 20,373, many western Virginians were outraged by his pronouncement that most of the votes from western Virginia had not been delivered to Richmond. Due to the fact that many vote totals were lost, it is unclear how western Virginians voted. Some historians believed that the overwhelming majority voted against secession, but a detailed study by historian Richard Curry\* concluded that a sizeable minority in western Virginia voted for the Ordinance of Secession. The war that was splitting the nation was now about to rend the state of Virginia.



"How Virginia Was Voted  
Out Of The Union"  
*Harper's Weekly*  
15 June 1861

\*Richard O. Curry, *A House Divided: A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1964)

### **Primary Documents:**

[Letter, "To the People of North-Western Virginia"](#)

["The Election News"](#)

[Vote in Kanawha County on the Ordinance of Secession \(Artificial Statehood Collection, Ms79-244\)](#)

[Previous Chapter](#) | [Next Chapter](#)

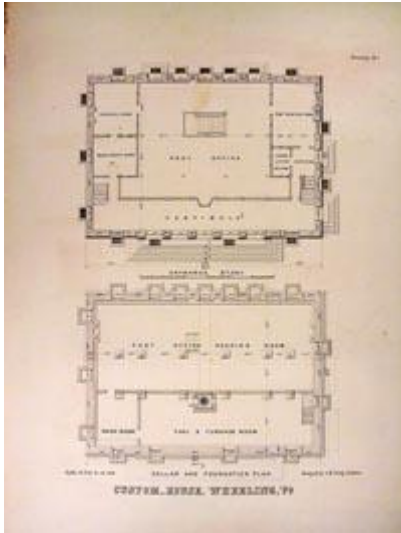
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## **Chapter Eleven** **West Virginia Constitutional Convention**

**1861-1863**



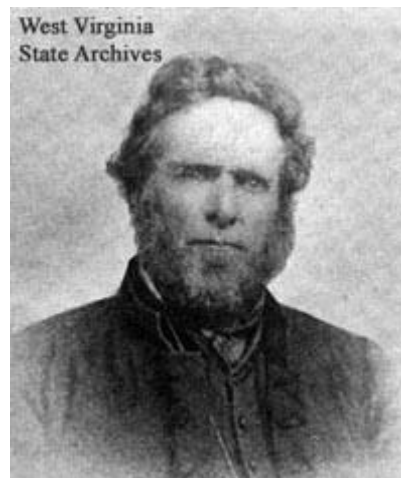
Custom House, Wheeling

On November 26, 1861, delegates met in Wheeling to create a Constitution for the new state. Some of the issues they addressed include the name of the new state, boundaries, and slavery.

Although the voters had approved the creation of "Kanawha," many delegates were opposed to the name. Opposition to Kanawha came from the fact that a county and two rivers already had that name. United States Senator Waitman T. Willey, who was in attendance, drew laughter when he stated that some of his constituents found it difficult to spell. Willey added, "I have no objection to any name that is convenient, though I will say that in this case I think the rose would smell sweeter by some other name." A [lengthy debate ensued as to the best name for the new state](#). A number of delegates spoke strongly either in favor of or against the inclusion of "Virginia" in the new state name. Eventually, "West Virginia" was selected.

Determining the boundaries of the new state was a difficult issue. The Committee on Boundary proposed that an additional thirty-two counties be added to the thirty-nine already included. Debates ensued, and a number of proposed counties were rejected, some due to large numbers of slaves, secession sentiment, or debt. On December 13, the convention determined that West Virginia would include the thirty-nine original counties and five additional. Also, seven more counties would be added if their voters approved.

Slavery was an issue that hung over the convention. On November 30, 1861, Robert Hagar of Boone County called for a free state and proposed gradual emancipation. Gordon Battelle of Ohio County, a Methodist minister, proposed forbidding additional slaves from entering the state and gradual emancipation for [slaves in the new state](#). Battelle pressed for gradual emancipation, but was unable to convince a majority of delegates to support its inclusion in the constitution. The finished document simply stated, "No slave shall be brought, or free person of color be permitted to come into this State for permanent residence."



Gordon Battelle

Slight changes were also made to the structure of government. Probably the most controversial change was the introduction of the township system to replace the Virginia county court system.

The [new constitution](#) was approved in a unanimous vote by the delegates on February 18, 1862. It was then submitted to the voters of West Virginia, who, on April 3, overwhelmingly approved the constitution, 18,862 to 514.

## Primary Documents:

[Delegates to the Constitutional Convention](#)

[Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia](#)

["What's In a Name": The Naming of West Virginia](#)

[First Constitution of West Virginia](#)

[Front Page of a Certified Copy of the Constitution](#)

[Vote Totals by County on the West Virginia State Constitution](#)

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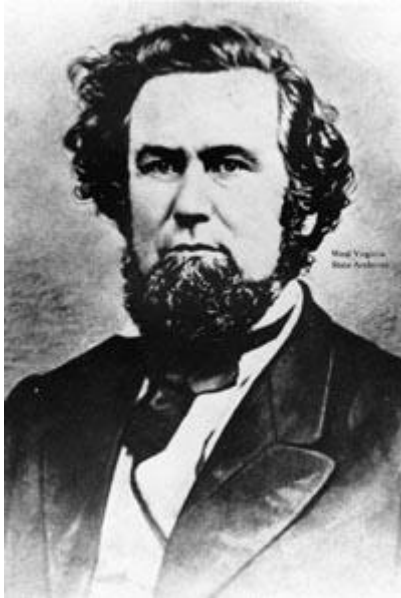
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## **Chapter Twelve** **Reorganized Government of Virginia** **Approves Separation**

According to Article IV, Section III, of the United States Constitution, "New states may be admitted by the Congress into this union; but no new states shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state; nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states, or parts of states, without the consent of the legislatures of the states concerned as well as of the Congress."

West Virginia statehood leaders had to obtain permission from Virginia in order to satisfy this constitutional restriction. The creation of the Reorganized Government of Virginia allowed them to seek consent from this pro-Union body instead of the Confederate Virginia government in Richmond.



Governor Francis Pierpont

On May 6, 1862, the General Assembly of the Reorganized Government of Virginia was convened by Governor Francis Pierpont. One week later, the General Assembly passed an [act granting permission for creation of the new state](#). The Reorganized Government of Virginia continued to function as the Union government of Virginia until 1868.

### **Primary Documents:**

[Governor Pierpont's Address to the Reorganized Government of Virginia, 6 May 1862](#)  
[Act of the Reorganized Government of Virginia Granting Permission for Creation of New State](#)

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## **Chapter Thirteen** **Congressional Debate** **on the Admission of West Virginia**

On May 29, 1862, Senator Waitman T. Willey presented a formal petition to the United States Senate for the admission of West Virginia to the Union. Willey's petition was referred to the Committee on Territories. Senator John Carlile, who was a member of the committee, was assigned the task of writing the statehood bill. On June 23, Benjamin Wade, who chaired the Committee on Territories, reported the bill to the Senate. Carlile had added fifteen counties, provided for gradual emancipation, and required a new constitutional convention. West Virginians, including his fellow senator, were stunned by Carlile's apparent change of heart regarding statehood.

When the bill was introduced, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts called for an amendment requiring the emancipation of all slaves in West Virginia on July 4, 1863, but his proposal was defeated. Senator Willey then offered a substitute that called for the admission of West Virginia upon approval of gradual emancipation by the constitutional convention. Eventually, a compromise agreement resulted in the [Willey Amendment](#), which provided for gradual emancipation. On July 14, 1862, both the [Willey Amendment](#) and the West Virginia statehood bill passed by a vote of 23-17.



Senator Waitman T. Willey



Senator John S. Carlile

Carlile's effort to admit West Virginia to the Union without conditions failed. He then opposed the Willey Amendment and voted against the statehood bill, ruining his political career. For decades, historians have puzzled over Carlile's actions. He had long been the most prominent advocate for statehood, but eventually fought against its creation. Although it is unclear what motivated Carlile, it appears that as a strict constitutionalist, he did not believe that Congress had the right to impose conditions in the new state's constitution.

Debate in the House of Representatives was also contentious, but on December 10, 1862, the House passed the statehood bill by a vote of 96-55. It appeared West Virginia statehood was only a signature away.

## Primary Documents:

[Speech of Congressman Kellian V. Whaley on the Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[United States Senate Debate on the Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[United States House or Representatives Debate on the Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[Willey Amendment](#)

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## **Chapter Fourteen** **Lincoln's Dilemma**

**December 1862**

When President Abraham Lincoln received the statehood bill on December 22, 1862, he was deeply distressed. He asked the six members of his cabinet for written opinions on the constitutionality and expediency of admitting West Virginia to the Union, but they divided evenly. Lincoln had supported the creation of the Reorganized Government of Virginia, but recognized the statehood bill as being forced upon him by Radical Republicans in their effort to use the war to end slavery. Lincoln recognized the questionable nature of the state's creation, noting that "a measure made expedient by a war, is no precedent for times of peace." Despite reservations, on December 31, 1862, Lincoln signed the bill because he could not afford to lose the support of loyal West Virginians. In his opinion, he wrote:

"Doubtless those in remaining Virginia would return to the Union, so to speak, less reluctantly without the division of the old state than with it; but I think we could not save as much in this quarter by rejecting the new state, as we should lose by it in West Virginia. We can scarcely dispense with the aid of West Virginia in this struggle; much less can we afford to have her against us, in Congress and in the field. Her brave and good men regard her admission into the Union as a matter of life and death. They have been true to the Union under very severe trials. We have so acted as to justify their hopes; and we can not fully retain their confidence, and co-operation, if we seem to break faith with them."



President Abraham Lincoln

### **Primary Documents:**

[Opinions of Lincoln's Cabinet on the Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[Opinion of Abraham Lincoln on the Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[Accounts of Lincoln's Signing of the Statehood Bill](#)  
[Jacob Beeson Blair's Role in Lincoln's Approval of the Statehood Bill](#)

### **Other Sources:**

["Lincoln and the Vast Question of Slavery"](#)

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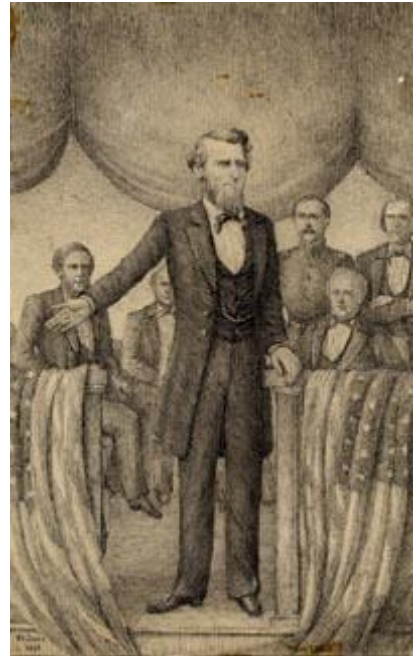
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## **Chapter Sixteen** **The New State of West Virginia**

West Virginia voters went to the polls on May 28, 1863, to elect their government officials. The Constitution Union Party candidate, Arthur I. Boreman of Wood County, won election as the state's first governor. On June 20, 1863, West Virginia became the thirty-fifth state in the Union. Inaugural ceremonies were held in Wheeling, the capital of the new state. In his [inaugural address](#), Governor Boreman referred to West Virginia as "the child of the rebellion," and stated that "to-day after many long and weary years of insult and injustice, culminating on the part of the East, in an attempt to destroy the Government, we have the proud satisfaction of proclaiming to those around us that we are a separate State in the Union." Citizens in Jefferson and Berkeley counties voted to become part of West Virginia, and the federal government affirmed this action.



Governor Arthur I. Boreman  
inaugurating the new state.  
Sketch by Joseph H. Diss Debar



Map of the New State  
of West Virginia

The road to West Virginia statehood was a rocky one, with determined statehood leaders overcoming opposition both from within the state and outside its borders. The war was still being waged, but as historian George E. Moore noted, "the loyal men of West Virginia took comfort from the fact that their devotion to a cause had placed in the American flag a new star - there to bear witness for the Constitution and the Union."\*

\*George E. Moore, *A Banner In The Hills: West Virginia's Statehood* (New York: Appleton- Century-Crofts, 1963), 207.

### **Primary Documents:**

[Map of the New State of West Virginia](#)  
[Arthur Boreman's Union Ballot, May 28, 1863](#)  
["The Inauguration"](#)  
["The Inauguration of the New State of West Virginia"](#)  
["The Day We Celebrate" \(West Virginia Inauguration\)](#)

[Order of Ceremonies for "The Inauguration Of The New State"](#)  
[Letter, James S. Wheat to Arthur I. Boreman Regarding the Inaugural Ceremonies](#)  
[Inaugural Address of Governor Arthur I. Boreman](#)  
[West Virginia State Seal](#)  
[Speech, Senator Peter Van Winkle on Reorganization of Virginia and Admission of West Virginia](#)  
[Return of Votes on Berkeley County \(Gerrardstown District\) Becoming a Part of West Virginia](#)  
[Congressional Recognition and Consent to Transfer of Berkeley and Jefferson Counties to West Virginia](#)  
[Proclamation of Governor Pierpont to Governor Boreman announcing Berkeley County Vote to Join West Virginia](#)  
[Legislative Act Making Berkeley County a Part of West Virginia](#)  
[Legislative Act Making Jefferson County a Part of West Virginia](#)

## Other Sources:

["The Makers of West Virginia](#)  
["Statehood for West Virginia: An Illegal Act"](#)

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