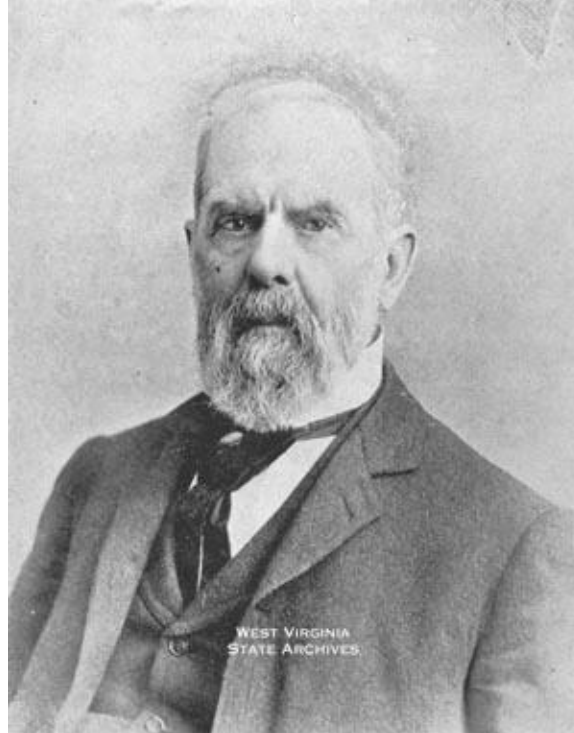


**ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
FEBRUARY 12**

Former congressman Jacob Beeson Blair, who was instrumental in convincing President Abraham Lincoln to sign the West Virginia statehood bill, died on February 12, 1901.

CSO: SS.8.22, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (*Parkersburg Daily State Journal*, Feb. 13, 1901)

1. Where was Judge Blair born?
2. Where did Blair's allegiances stand during the Civil War?
3. What was Judge Blair given a significant amount of credit for establishing?

Think Critically: What was the constitutionality of the creation of a new state from the corporate body of another state, even when Virginia was in rebellion? What would be the attitude of the new state, if Congress accepted it, to the fact of slavery within its midst? The two preceding questions were weighed by whom, before West Virginia's acceptance into the Union? What were the people of western Virginia required to accept before statehood was possible? What did this amendment call for? Why does Blair deserve a great deal of credit for West Virginia's acceptance into the Union?

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PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA, WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 18, 1901.

PRICE TWO CENTS

FAMOUS

Man in the Early Days of West Virginia.

Was Judge Beese Blair, Who Has Passed Away.

The news of the death of Judge "Beese" Blair, as he was familiarly called by the oldest citizens, was received here yesterday by Mrs. Holmes H. Moss, who is a daughter of the deceased. His death occurred at his home at Salt Lake City, Utah, and was rather sudden. He had been ill for several days with the grip, but was not thought to be in any danger. The disease, however, affected his heart, and he expired suddenly yesterday. His remains will be buried at Salt Lake City, as that was his own request. Besides Mrs. Moss, he has another daughter residing at Dayton, Ohio.

Jacob Beeson Blair.

Some of the men who did most to establish the new State of West Virginia, transferred their energies to other promising sections of the National Commonwealth. Among these was Hon. Jacob B. Blair, once a representative of Virginia and of West Virginia in State and National councils, and for three full terms an associate justice of the growing territory of Wyoming, and later surveyor general of Utah.

Jacob B. Blair was born at Parkersburg, Wood county, Virginia, April 11, 1821. He had the benefit of a common school education, studied law and was admitted to the bar of that county in 1844. At the time he was admitted to practice the list of lawyers in that vicinity included a good many prominent attorneys, and it required shrewdness and force, as well as industry and close application in a beginner to establish himself in the profession; but young Blair had the qualifications which insure success, and pushed himself steadily forward. He extended his acquaintance and reputation in neighboring counties, and at the beginning of the civil war was generally favorably known throughout his congressional district. He was a Union man, pronounced and positive, and threw his whole weight and influence into the movement to prevent the western section of Virginia from being carried into secession and rebellion. When Hon. John S. Carlisle resigned his seat in the Thirty-seventh Congress from that district, Judge Blair was chosen to fill the vacancy, in 1861, and was subsequently re-elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress, in 1863.

During his service in Congress, the bill to admit West Virginia into the Union was passed by Congress, and it is not giving undue credit to say that no one contrived more efficient aid to its passage than Judge Blair. When, after a hard-fought battle in the two houses of Congress, the victory was won by the friends of the new State, the fate of the soil in the hands of the secessionist was thought to be threatened with an adverse decision, and again Judge Blair brought every power of his earnest and patriotic nature into active use to dispel from the executive mind the doubts as to the constitutionality of the measure which some members of the cabinet would have implanted there. Fortunately for West Virginia, Mr. Lincoln inclined to the views advocated by the friends of the bill, and, on the 1st day of January, 1863, he gave Judge Blair the notice of his approval of it, as a New Year's gift to the new commonwealth.

At the close of his congressional service, Judge Blair was elected a member of the Legislature of West Virginia from Wood county; and in 1868 was appointed minister resident to Costa Rica, remaining in the diplomatic service of the government until 1872. In that year he was appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court of Wyoming territory, and, by successive appointments, he served continuously and acceptably in that position until the change of administration under Mr. Cleveland.

Judge Blair's residence was Salt Lake City, and although he retained a warm interest in the new commonwealth he helped create, he was an enthusiastic admirer of that vigorous and prosperous section of the West, with which he was identified.

Judge Blair was surveyor general of Utah at the time of his death.