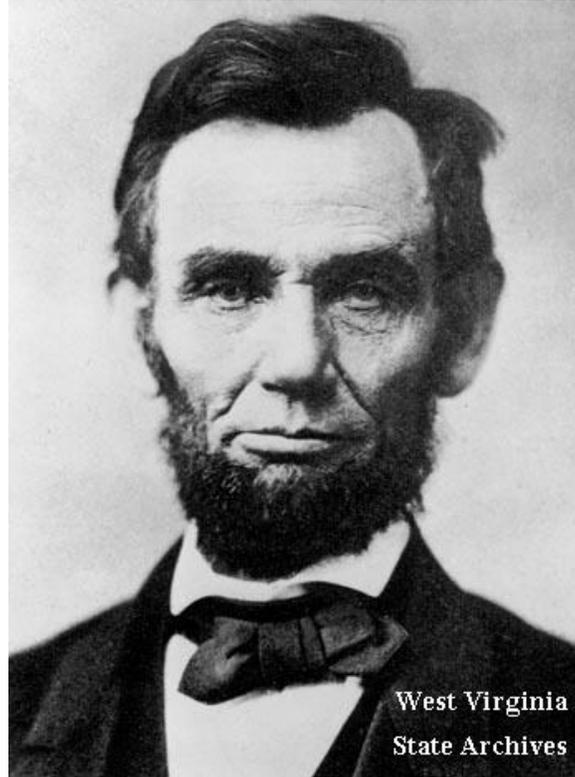


ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY DECEMBER 31



President Abraham Lincoln signed the West Virginia statehood bill on December 31, 1862.

CSO: SS.8.22, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (*The Formation of the State of West Virginia, 975.403 P239*)

1. Which advisors to President Lincoln expressed views in favor of West Virginia's statehood? Which were opposed?
2. What was the New Year's gift referenced by President Lincoln on December 31st?
3. How did Jacob Blair enter the Presidential mansion on January 1st? Do you think this would be possible today?

Think Critically: What did President Lincoln take out of the drawer at the Presidential mansion? The circumstances for the creation of West Virginia were unique. It was earlier stated in this document that it was not believed a two-thirds majority vote in Congress would be feasible for the creation of West Virginia. The supplemental act that followed specified that several counties would need to vote on and ratify the conditions in the said act. Why do you think this supplemental act was added? Whose controlled these counties (Union or Confederate)?

under the new State of Virginia shall accept the President's proposition, as stated in his proclamation of the 22d of September, all doubters about the Constitutionality of the act will be silenced; and whether they be silenced or not, there will stand the record of the majority of this House to give validity to their act, and from which there can be no appeal."

"The SPEAKER. The hour of two o'clock having arrived, debate is closed by order of the House, and the question recurs upon the third reading of the bill.

"The bill was ordered to be read a third time; and it was accordingly read the third time.

"Mr. WICKLIFFE. I call for the yeas and nays upon the passage of the bill.

"The yeas and nays were ordered.

"The question was put; and it was decided in the affirmative—yeas 96, nays 55; as follows:

"YEAS—Messrs. Aldrich, Arnold, Babbitt, Baker, Baxter, Beaman, Bingham, Jacob B. Blair, S. S. Blair, Blake, Wm. G. Brown, Buffington, Burnham, Campbell, Casey, Chamberlain, Clark, Clements, Colfax, Frederick A. Conkling, Covode, Cutler, Davis, Duell, Dunn, Edgerton, Edwards, Eliot, Ely, Fenton, Samuel C. Fessenden, Thomas A. D. Fessenden, Franchot, Frank, Goodwin, Gurley, Haight, Hale, Harrison, Hickman, Hooper, Horton, Hutchins, Julian, Kelley, Francis W. Kellogg, William Kellogg, Killinger, Lansing, Lehman, Loomis, Lovejoy, Low, McKnight, McPherson, Maynard, Mitchell, Moorhead, Anson P. Morrill, Justin S. Morrill, Nixon, Noell, Olin, Patton, Timothy G. Phelps, Pike, Pomeroy, Porter, Potter, John H. Rice, Riddle, Edward H. Rollins, Sargent, Sedgwick, Shanks, Sheffield, Shellabarger, Sherman, Sloan, Spaulding, Stevens, Stratton, Trimble, Trowbridge, Van Horn, Van Valkenburgh, Van Wyck, Verree, Walker, Wall, Washburne, Whaley, Albert S. White, Wilson, Windom, and Worcester—96.

"NAYS—Messrs. William J. Allen, Alley, Ancona, Ashley, Bailey, Biddle, Cobb, Roscoe Conkling, Conway, Cox, Cravens, Crisfield, Crittenden, Delano, Delaplaine, Diven, Dunlap, Gooch, Granger, Grider, Hall, Harding, Holman, Johnson, Kerrigan, Knapp, Law, Mallory, Menzies, Morris, Noble, Norton, Odell, Pendleton, Price, Alexander H. Rice, Richardson, Robinson, James S. Rollins, Segar,

Shiel, Smith, John B. Steele, William G. Steele, Stiles, Benjamin F. Thomas, Francis Thomas, Train, Vallandigham, Voorhees, Ward, Chilton A. White, Wickliffe, Wright, and Yeaman—55.

“So the bill was passed.

“During the call of the roll, Mr. DAWES stated that he had paired off upon this vote with Mr. WALTON, who would have voted in the affirmative, while he should have voted in the negative.

“Mr. FRANCHOT stated that his colleague, Mr. WHEELER, was absent on account of sickness in his family.

“Mr. BINGHAM moved to reconsider the vote by which the bill was passed ; and also moved to lay the motion to reconsider on the table.

“The latter motion was agreed to.”

WE received little active aid from Massachusetts in either House. They seemed to be sore at the remarks published in the *Boston Courier*, in December, 1860. Senator WILSON rudely repulsed myself and friends, though he subsequently voted in our favor. Many of her papers, however, especially the *Worcester Spy*, spoke very kindly and decidedly in our favor. There was no General BUTLER representing her in Congress at that time.

The bill then went into the President's hands for approval or veto. The opponents followed it there with unabated zeal. Many of the papers said Mr. LINCOLN would veto it. He required the views of each of his Cabinet, then in Washington, to be given in writing. Messrs. SEWARD, CHASE and STANTON, the brains of the Cabinet, expressed themselves strongly in our favor ; while Messrs. WELLES, BLAIR and BATES, (the latter still adhering to the views expressed in his letter to Mr. RITCHIE, in 1861) expressed themselves opposed—Mr. HARLAN being absent. Numerically, therefore, the President received no aid from his Constitutional advisers, but he could justly appreciate the arguments and reasons given. It may be then, to the honest, hard sense, and wisdom of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, that we are indebted for the new State ; for if he had vetoed, we could not have hoped to command a two-thirds vote of Congress.

The Hon. JACOB B. BLAIR seems to have been most alive to the critical situation at this time, and his efforts were untiring ; and his honesty and earnestness had effect, I have no doubt. I happened to be in New York on private business, at this time, and gathering

from the papers the critical situation, I went to Washington the 31st of December, called on Mr. BLAIR that evening, who informed me that he had just come from the President, who had told him to call next morning and receive a New Year's gift. We both slept well that night. In the morning, Mr. BLAIR, as he afterwards told me, called at the Presidential mansion before the doors were opened, went in at a window, met the President, who had just got up—he went immediately to a drawer, took out, and showed him the Bill, with his signature affixed—as the New Year's gift he had promised—manifesting the simplicity and joyousness of a child, when it feels it has done its duty, and gratified a friend. I soon after left for home.

The 14th of February following Mr. CARLISLE introduced the following in the Senate:

“AN ACT

Supplemental to the act entitled “An Act for the admission of the State of West Virginia into the Union and for other purposes;” approved December 31st, 1862.

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress Assembled, That the proclamation authorized by the second section of the act entitled “An Act for the admission of the State of West Virginia into the Union and for other purposes,” approved December 31st, 1862, shall not be issued by the President until after the following counties in said act, viz: Boone, Logan, Wyoming, Mercer, McDowell, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Greenbrier, Monroe, Pendleton, Fayette, Nicholas and Clay, now in the possession of the so called Confederate Government, and over which the restored Government of the State of Virginia has not been extended or expressed, have voted on and ratified the conditions contained in said act.

“SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That said Proclamation shall not be issued unless the conditions of said act shall have been ratified by the people, after an opportunity to vote upon the same has been afforded to the voters in each of the counties named in the said act—nor shall it be issued if it shall be made to appear to the President by satisfactory evidence that the people have been prevented from having the same freely canvassed before them, or that they have

been deterred from voting by the presence of military force, it being the intention of Congress to secure to the voters of every county named therein the free exercise of the right of suffrage thereon."

It was read twice by its title and referred to the Judiciary Committee, who reported adversely. February 26 Mr. CARLISLE moved that his supplementary bill be taken up and considered, which motion the Senate refused by the following vote :

"Mr. SHERMAN. Before the vote is taken I desire to say that my colleague (Mr. WADE) is detained at his lodgings by illness. That will explain his absence on several votes.

"The question being taken by yeas and nays, resulted—yeas 12, nays 28; as follows :

"YEAS—Messrs. Bayard, Carlisle, Davis, Kennedy, Latham, Nesmith, Powell, Rice, Richardson, Saulsbury, Turpie, and Wilson of Missouri—12.

"NAYS—Messrs. Anthony, Arnold, Chandler, Clark, Collamer, Dixon, Doolittle, Fessenden, Foot, Foster, Grimes, Harding, Harris, Hicks, Howard, Howe, King, Lane of Kansas, Morrill, Pomeroy, Sherman, Sumner, Ten Eyck, Trumbull, Wilkinson, Willey, Wilmot, and Wilson of Massachusetts—28.

"So the Senate refused to consider the bill."

MR. CARLISLE and his confederates continued to push their opposition to the new State, until he stood in the Senate supported only by eleven rebel sympathizers, it would seem.

In pursuance of previous summons by the Commissioners, the Convention re-assembled the 18th of February, 1863, to approve, or reject the gradual emancipation clause. The opposition had become greatly softened, in view of the unanimous expression of their constituents for a gradual emancipation clause, by their informal vote in the Spring of 1862, and the action of Congress and President, and concluded there was to be a new State in spite of their opposition. Still some contended that the assent of the Legislature to the Amendment was indispensable. But after referring to the Acts touching