

Biographies of western delegates who attended the 1861 Virginia Secession Convention were transcribed by undergraduate students enrolled in Dr. Billy Joe Peyton's Fall 2010 "Introduction to Public History" class at West Virginia State University.

By Gary Blackhurst

JAMES BURLEY, of Marshall County (now in West Virginia), was born about 1800. He was a son of Jacob Burley and was a merchant and farmer. Burley became deputy sheriff of Marshall County in 1835, and in 1850 he was commissioned as a justice of the peace for Marshall County. He was married twice, first to Elizabeth Alexander, and then to Margaret Alexander, and lived at Moundsville.

As Marshall County's delegate in the 1861 Convention, Burley voted against secession on April 4 and on April 17. He was expelled from the Convention in June 1861, because of his "disloyalty" to Virginia and the Confederacy. He was a member of the West Virginia Senate from 1863 to 1869. He died on January 4, 1870.

SOURCES: PMWV, p.63 G. L. Granmer, and others, History of the Upper Ohio Valley (Madison, Wis., 1890) II, 682; Scott Powell, History of Marshall County (Moundsville, W. Va., 1925) p. 116; Justices, Reg. 7&8.