

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 Jeffrie Carroll

Marshall M. Dent (Monongalia)

MARSHALL MORTIMER DENT, of Monongalia County (now in West Virginia), was born on May 2, 1828, near Morgantown, Monongalia County, and was the son of Dr. Marmaduke Dent and Sarah Price Dent. He was a lawyer and lived for most of his life in Morgantown. He married Mary Caroline Roberts, a New England abolitionist. Dent was clerk of Monongalia County and also clerk of the judicial circuit which included Monongalia County. He was also editor of the Morgantown *Virginia Star*.

Dent, a strong Unionist, was a delegate from Monongalia County to the State Convention. He voted against secession both on April 4 and on April 17. Because of his active opposition to secession thereafter, he was expelled from the Virginia Convention. His son, Marmaduke H. Dent, became an associate justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.

Sources: Encyclopedia of Contemporary Biography of West Virginia (N.Y., 1894), pp. 127, 156; Biographical and Portrait Cyclopedic of Monogalia, Marion, and Taylor Counties (Philadelphia, 1895), "Monongalia County," p. 25.