

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 Autumn Drummond

### **Ephraim B. Hall (Marion)**

EPHRAIM BENONI HALL, of Marion County (now in West Virginia), was born on August 29, 1822, at Middletown (now Fairmont), then in Harrison County. He was the son of Rynear Hall and Susannah Lowe Hall, and was educated at Rector College at Pruntytown (now Williamsport), then in Harrison County. He was a lawyer and practiced in Marion County, which was formed from Harrison in 1842. In 1854 he married Ella Sophia Jones.

As one of Marion County's two delegates to the State Convention, Hall voted against secession on April 4 and again on April 17. He returned to the west and was a member of the Wheeling Convention. Because of his "disloyalty to the State Government at Richmond" and his advocacy of separate statehood for western Virginia, Hall was expelled from the Virginia Convention in June, 1861.

He played an active part in the formation of the new state, and he was a member of West Virginia's first constitutional convention. In 1865 he became attorney general of West Virginia, but he resigned when he was elected that same year as judge of the Tenth Judicial Circuit. He served until 1872, when he moved to Santa Barbara, California. Hall was an active attorney in California until his death there on January 16, 1898.

Sources: Charles M. Ambler, (ed.), *Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia* (Huntington, 1946), Introduction, p. 73; PMWV, p. 520.