

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 Robert Roush

THOMAS MASLIN, of Hardy County (now in West Virginia), was born on October 28, 1808, at Gerardstown, Berkeley County (now in West Virginia), and was the son of William Maslin and Ann M. Maslin. He had only a limited education and was employed, at the age of fifteen, as a clerk in a store at Harpers Ferry. About 1831 he opened his own store at Moorfield, Hardy county, and, "relying entirely upon his own energy, integrity and capacity for business," became a successful merchant.

In 1837 Maslin became a justice of the peace of Hardy County, and in 1852 he became presiding justice of the county court. He also helped organize the Moorfield branch of the Bank of the Valley and was the bank's first president.

He was elected by an almost unanimous vote to represent Hardy County in the State convention. He voted against secession on April 4, but, having returned home to attend a special meeting of the county court, he was not present for the crucial vote of April 17. He continued to act as presiding justice of Hardy County until 1863, when West Virginia became a separate state.

He supported the confederacy during the war, and afterwards he resumed his various business activities in Moorfield. He was a delegate to the West Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1872. Maslin died on September 21, 1878, in Moorfield.

SOURCES: F. V. Aler, *History of Martinsburg and Berkeley County, West Virginia* (Hagerstown, Md., 1888), pp. 148-149; Alvin E. Moore, *History of Hardy County* (Parsons, W. Va., 1963), pp. 82, 83, 121, 129.