

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 Byron Holmes

**JAMES CLARK McGREW**, of Preston County (now in West Virginia), was the son of Col. James McGrew and Isabella Clark McGrew and was born on September 14, 1813, in what was then Monongalia County. He was educated in local schools and became a clerk in a general store at Kingwood, Preston County. In 1841 he married Persis Hagans. McGrew went into business for himself and became a prosperous merchant in Kingwood, but he took little part in public life before 1861.

He represented Preston County in the State Convention and was elected as a Unionist. He voted against secession on April 4 and again on April 17. His continued opposition to secession after his return to Preston County led to his expulsion from the Virginia Convention in June.

McGrew was a member of the West Virginia legislature from 1863 to 1865. In 1868 he was elected to the federal House of Representatives and served from 1869 to 1873. He was also active in business affairs and was cashier and later president of the National Bank of Kingwood. He died on September 10, 1910, at Kingwood.

SOURCES: BDAC, p. 1300; *PMWZ*, pp. 423-425.