

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 Jack Stephenson

Paul McNeel

PAUL McNEEL (or McNEIL), of Pocahontas County (now in West Virginia), was born on June 10, 1803, in Greenbrier County and was the son of Isaac McNeel and Rachel McKeever McNeel. He was a farmer and a stock raiser and was married to Rachel Cameron Lee, McNeel became deputy sheriff of Pocahontas County in 1830, and in 1845 he became a justice of the peace. He was also a colonel in the militia.

McNeel represented Pocahontas County in the State Convention and voted against secession on April 4. He was absent from the Convention, because of illness, on April 17, but on June 12, at the beginning of the first adjourned session, he recorded his vote for secession. He died December 8, 1872, in Pocahontas County.

Sources: John A. McNeel, "Paul McNeel," typescript in West Virginia Department of Archives and History, Charleston, West Virginia (copy provided by Mr. James L. Hupp); census population schedules for Logan County, 1860