A SESQUICENTENNIAL

JANUARY 5 - 11, 1862

On Jan. 9, 1862, members of the Constitutional Convention for the proposed state of West Virginia took up the section of the constitution dealing with legislative delegates. As proposed, there would be 18 senators and 46 delegates, but some members questioned the appropriateness of having 46 delegates.

Peter G. Van Winkle of Wood County favored 54, while another opposed any change. Joseph Pomeroy of Hancock County had a different idea: "I want every county in this new State to have a representative; I want the small as well as the large ones."

The debate continued as delegates argued over whether the principle of representation based on population or that of county equality would

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Twenty-Fifth Day.

FRIDAY, Jan. 10.

The Convention was opened with prayer by Rev. J. G. West, member of the Legislature from Wetzel.

The consideration of the second section of the Legislative Committee was resumed.

The first clause of the section formerly passed, by and now under consideration, reads.

"2. The Senate shall be composed of eighteen and the House of Delegates of forty-six members."

The question was upon the motion made yesterday by Mr. Van Winkle to strike out "forty-six" and insert "fiftyfour."

determine apportionment. The convention eventually adopted the number 47 with a provision to increase that number if needed. That change, it was argued, better allocated delegates based on population. The language delegates adopted in 1862 as well as the ongoing debate remains largely unchanged today.

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

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