

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 Angela Mink

BURWELL SPURLOCK, of Wayne County (now in West Virginia), was born in Montgomery County, Virginia, on May 10, 1790, and was a son of Jesse Spurlock and Sally Harber Spurlock. When he was still young, his family settled on the Ohio River in what became Cabell County. Spurlock had only a few months of formal schooling, but he educated himself by extensive reading. He was converted to Methodism as a young man, and in 1818 he became a minister of that denomination. He was married twice, first to Sallie Morrison, and then to Nancy Garrett. Spurlock was a circuit rider and preached both in eastern Kentucky and in western Virginia, with a reputation throughout the region as a powerful and eloquent preacher. Age and failing health finally forced his retirement from the active ministry, and he settled on a farm in Wayne County. He was the county's delegate in the Convention and was elected as a Unionist. He voted against secession on April 4 and again on April 17. He died on August 5, 1879, in Wayne County.

SOURCES: George S. Wallace, *Cabell County Annals and Families* (Richmond, 1935), pp. 492-495 (picture, p. 493); Albert H. Redford, *History of Methodism in Kentucky* (Nashville, Tenn, 1889-90), III, 75.