

# West Virginia: 150 Years of Statehood

## Chapter 12: The Civil War and West Virginia's Statehood Movement– Quick Notes

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**CHAPTER 12**

**THE CIVIL WAR AND WEST VIRGINIA'S STATEHOOD MOVEMENT**

**Section 1** [Early Events Set the Stage for Big Changes](#)

**Section 2** [The Final Days of the War and a New Day for West Virginia](#)

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Slide 2

**SECTION 1**

**Early Events Set the Stage for Big Changes**

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**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

**What Civil War battles were fought in western Virginia?**

**What steps were taken to create a new state of West Virginia?**

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**The Philippi Races**

A little over a week after the people of Virginia voted to secede from the Union, Confederate Colonel George Porterfield gained control of the B&O Railroad town of Grafton. Union General George McClellan came from the east and Colonel Benjamin Kelley from the north to take back the town.

The movement of Union troops caused Colonel George Porterfield to move to Philippi. Kelley's forces routed the Confederates there, chasing them to Beverly.

The battle is often called **The Philippi Races** because the southern soldiers fled so quickly.



The battle is also sometimes called the **first land battle of the Civil War**.

The real importance of the battle was that it showed the determination of the Union to maintain control of the B&O.

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**The Restored Government of the State of Virginia**

The Second Wheeling Convention adopted a resolution restoring the government of Virginia to the Union.

Francis H. Pierpont, from Marion County, was chosen Governor.





The State of Virginia now had two governments.

John S. Carlile and Waitman T. Willey were chosen as United States Senators.

One in Richmond that supported the Confederacy

One in Wheeling that supported the Union

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**The Battle of Rich Mountain**

After the battle at Philippi

General McClellan wanted to drive the Confederates from the Monongahela Valley.

Confederate General Robert S. Garnett strengthened the South's position at Beverly and established strong positions on Rich Mountain and Laurel Hill. He planned to attack the B&O at Clarksburg, Grafton, and Rowelsburg.

To protect the railroad, the Union strategy called for General Thomas Morris to hold General Garnett on Laurel Hill while General William S. Rosecrans protected the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike.

General William S. Rosecrans defeated Lt. Colonel John Pegram at Rich Mountain.

General Garnett was killed at the Battle of Corrick's Ford when he tried to go from Laurel Hill to Maryland.

The Battle of Rich Mountain allowed the Restored Government of the State of Virginia to operate safely and push for statehood for western Virginia.

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
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**The Battle of Scary Creek**

Scary Creek is located in Putnam County between Charleston and Point Pleasant.

General Henry Wise, a former governor of Virginia, had defeated Union forces in Charleston and was marching toward Point Pleasant when he was intercepted by a force under Union General Jacob D. Cox at Scary

Wise defeated Cox's troops, but, instead of going on to Point Pleasant, he retreated to Gauley Bridge in Fayette County. This move gave Cox time to receive reinforcements to enable him to pursue the Confederates. Wise, anticipating Cox's move, crossed the Gauley River and burned the bridge behind him. From there, he went to White Sulphur Springs.

When Cox arrived at Gauley Bridge and found the bridge burned, he was unable to go further.

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**The Battle of Forks and Spoons**


This battle took place in Nicholas County.

General Erastus B. Tyler was sent by General William Rosecrans to occupy Keslers' Cross Lanes, near Summersville.

General John Floyd sent General Wise, who had joined forces with him in White Sulphur Springs after his move from Gauley Bridge, to keep General Cox's troops occupied at Gauley Bridge, while he took his men to attack Tyler's forces.

The Confederates, who attacked while the Union forces were eating breakfast, completely routed Tyler's troops.



The fighting is called The Battle of Forks and Spoons because those were the weapons the Union troops had in their hands at the time of the attack.

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**The Battle of Carnifex Ferry**

The Battle of Carnifex Ferry was fought in Nicholas County.



General Rosecrans reacted to General Floyd's victory at Kesler's Cross Lanes by attacking Confederate troops at Summersville.



Union troops had to cross an open field in order to attack the enemy. Each time the troops moved forward, they were driven back.

When night came, the Union forces drew back to plan for the next day.

For some unexplained reason, General Floyd took his troops and retreated across the Gauley River.

The Battle of Carnifex Ferry was the last significant fighting in the Kanawha Valley in 1861.

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**Robert E. Lee in Western Virginia**

After General Robert Garnett's death, Robert E. Lee brought his troops to western Virginia, hoping to recapture the Monongahela Valley.

His plan was **unsuccessful** because

- a cold spell brought torrential rains and freezing temperatures.
- mud made the movement of equipment impossible.
- an epidemic of measles swept through the Confederate army.

Generals Wise and Floyd were unable to attack General Rosecrans on Big Sewell Mountain.



Because winter was coming, Lee was transferred to South Carolina before he could accomplish his goal.

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**A Bright Spot for Robert E. Lee in Western Virginia**

Even though his venture into western Virginia was unsuccessful, Robert E. Lee had his first encounter with Traveller, his faithful horse throughout much of the Civil War.



Traveller, who was bred in Blue Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County, was originally named Jeff Davis.

When Lee first saw him, the horse was named Greenbrier.

Lee made an offer to buy the horse, but before the transaction could be completed, he was transferred to South Carolina.

A second encounter with Greenbrier occurred while Lee was in South Carolina.

This time the horse was offered to Lee as a gift. When Lee refused the gift, the grey American saddlebred was offered for sale for \$200.

Lee changed the horse's name to Traveller.

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**The Second Wheeling Convention**

The Second Wheeling Convention convened on August 6, 1861, before the battles of Kesler's Cross Lanes and Carnifex Ferry.



On August 20, the convention passed an ordinance calling for the creation of the State of Kanawha.

A little over a month after the Battle of Carnifex Ferry, the ordinance was approved by the voters—18,408 to 781.

The people elected 53 delegates to attend a constitutional convention, also to be held in Wheeling.

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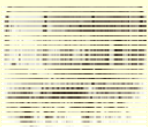
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**Issues at the Constitutional Convention**

Delegates were faced with the tasks of

- ❖choosing a name for the new state.
- ❖establishing boundaries for the state.
- ❖taking a position on slavery.
- ❖establishing an organizational pattern for the government.



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**Naming The New State**

Recommended names for the new state included

Allegheny	
Augusta	1 vote
Columbia	
Kanawha	9 votes
New Virginia	
Potomac	
West Virginia	39 votes
Western Virginia	2 votes

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**Establishing Boundaries for the New State**



**Issue:** How much land should be included in the new state?  
Should it only include land west of the Allegheny Mountains?

**Recommendation:** Add eastern counties of Berkeley, Frederick, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Morgan, and Pendleton.

**Decision:** Add all of the eastern counties, except Frederick.

The eastern counties were added because the B&O Railroad ran through that part of the state.

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**Recommendation on Slavery**

**PROPOSALS**

Abolish slavery gradually

Allow people to vote on slavery issue

Not allow slaves or free blacks to enter the state after the new constitution became law

The proposal adopted

Not allow slaves or free blacks to enter the state after the new constitution became law

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**Establishing an Organizational Plan for the Government**

The county court system was replaced by a township system

Township officials included supervisor, clerk, road surveyors, overseer of the poor, constables, sheriff, and justices.

On April 3, 1862, voters were asked to approve the new Constitution. The vote was overwhelming approval—18,062 to 514.

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**Next Steps toward Statehood**

When the General Assembly of the Restored Government of the State of Virginia met, Governor Francis Pierpont recommended it accept the Constitutional Convention's request for the creation of a new state.



On May 13, 1862, the General Assembly authorized the creation of the State of West Virginia.

According to Article IV, Section 3 of the United States Constitution, a request for statehood must be approved by both houses of Congress and signed by the president.

On May 29, Senator Waitman T. Willey submitted West Virginia's application to Congress, but, after much debate and a number of proposed amendments to the application, it became clear that the statehood bill would not pass without some definitive position on slavery.

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**The Willey Amendment**

The Amendment withdrew the proposal of the Constitutional Convention to prohibit free blacks from entering the state.



The Amendment created a systematic way to free all the slaves within West Virginia.

This would be accomplished by freeing all slaves in West Virginia over 21 years of age on July 4, 1863. Slaves younger than 21 on that date would be freed when they reached the age of 21.

The proposal passed the **United States Senate** on July 14, 1862.

The **House of Representatives** approved the bill in December 1862.

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**SECTION 2**

**The Final Days of the War and a New Day for West Virginia**

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**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

Where was the last fighting of the Civil War in West Virginia?

What were the final barriers to West Virginia's statehood?

Who were West Virginia's first elected officials?

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**The Battle to Control the Railroads**

In the eastern panhandle, the B&O Railroad was important to both the Union and the Confederacy.

There were many battles to gain and keep control of the railroad. Confederate General Stonewall Jackson played a primary role in those campaigns

To keep the railroad from being used by Union forces, Confederate soldiers

- destroyed tracks.
- burned engine houses, stations, and blacksmith shops.
- ripped rails from the cross ties.
- burned cross ties.
- heated and bent the rails.



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General William Loring sent General Albert Gallatin Jenkins on a cavalry raid.

**The Jenkins Raid**


Route of his raid:



Jenkins began in Monroe County and traveled through Beverly, Buckhannon, Weston, Glenville, Spencer, Ripley, and Ravenswood. There he crossed the Ohio River and traveled to a point south of the Kanawha River where he recrossed the Ohio. From there he returned to his home in Cabell County. Later he followed the Guyandotte River to Raleigh County.

Accomplishments of his raid:

- Confiscated \$5,525 from a Union paymaster in Ripley
- Captured 300 Union soldiers in Spencer
- Captured 5,000 stands of arms in Buckhannon



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**Lincoln's Dilemma**

Lincoln was faced with two major issues as he considered signing West Virginia's statehood bill.


The primary question was "Is the statehood bill constitutional?"

Another consideration was the issue of secession.

"Does allowing West Virginia to become a state, promote secession?"

"Is West Virginia actually seceding from Virginia?"

Lincoln finally signed the bill on December 31, 1862.



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**Another Hurdle to Statehood**

Because Congress changed the original statehood bill by adding the Willey Amendment, the Constitutional Convention was required to vote on the revised bill.

On February 18, 1863, the convention approved the amendment.

Now the amended bill had to be resubmitted to the people for approval.

On March 26, 1863, the people approved the revised bill by a vote of 26,632 to 534.

On April 20, 1863, President Lincoln signed a proclamation stating that sixty days later, West Virginia would become the 35<sup>th</sup> Star in the nation's flag.

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**Last Major Action of the Civil War in Western Virginia**

The **Jones-Imboden Raid**

The objectives of the raid included:

- To completely destroy the usefulness of the B&O Railroad
- To overthrow the Restored Government of the State of Virginia and stop the statehood movement
- To acquire supplies and recruit troops

How well did John D. Imboden and William E. Jones achieve their objectives?

John D. Imboden William E. Jones

They gained supplies. They took 700 prisoners, 3,000 cattle, \$100,000 worth of horses, mules, and wagons. They destroyed two trains and several engines, but did not gain complete control of the B&O. They did not overthrow the Restored Government of the State of Virginia and stop the West Virginia statehood movement.

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**Major battles of the Civil War in West Virginia**




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**Wheeling Becomes West Virginia's First Capital**

**Executive Branch**


Arthur I. Boreman (Wood County)	Governor
Samuel Crane (Randolph County)	Auditor
Campbell Tarr (Brooke County)	Treasurer
J. Edgar Boyers (Tyler County)	Secretary of State
Bolten Caldwell (Ohio County)	Attorney General

**Legislative Branch**



20 Senators

51 Delegates



**Judicial Branch**

3 judges elected

Organized the WV Court of Appeals

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**When West Virginia became a state, the Restored Government of Virginia moved its headquarters to Alexandria, Virginia.**

After the move, Francis Pierpont performed one last action in regard to West Virginia.



Berkeley and Jefferson counties were given permission to vote on joining West Virginia or staying with Virginia. Both voted to join, giving the new state fifty counties.

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**The Civil War Moves Out of West Virginia**

The last fighting of the Civil War in West Virginia occurred at Salem and **Droop Mountain**.

At Droop Mountain, General William W. Averell defeated General John Echols on November 6, 1863. This was one of the largest battles fought in West Virginia.



A former soldier, James D. Sutton, fought at Droop Mountain; later, as a member of the West Virginia House of Delegates, he persuaded the Legislature to commemorate the battle site. The result was the creation of Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park, the first state park in West Virginia.

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**West Virginia's First National Representatives**

**West Virginia's First United States Senators**

Waitman T. Willey (Monongalia County)

Peter G. VanWinkle (Wood County)

**West Virginia's First Members of the House of Representatives**

Jacob B. Blair (Wood County)

William G. Brown (Preston County)

Keillan Van Rensselaer Whaley (Mason County)

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