

charter was repealed in 1876. Four year later, in 1880, it was again incorporated, this time by the Circuit Court. Robert Patterson was elected mayor and Daniel W. Reynolds recorder.

CHAPTER VI

DURING THE CIVIL WAR

It is regrettable that accurate data of events occurring in Pleasants county during the Civil War are not found in the county records, such as the official acts, the enlistments, the companies formed, with their officers, and the ballots taken.

Slavery had never gained a strong foot-hold here, yet when dissension arose between the South and the North over that question, covered as it was by the apparently paramount matter of the right of secession, there were many adherents of the South in this county. After the fading away of the Whig and Know Nothing parties the sentiment here was overwhelmingly Democratic. This was shown by the balloting for President in 1860, Breckenridge receiving 165 votes, Bell 142 and Douglas 121, while only one vote was cast for Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate. It is said that James Reynolds of French creek was the sole supporter of Lincoln.

The secession of South Carolina in December, following the announcement of Lincoln's election, was an example for other slave holding States. Virginia was slower than most others, but Governor Letcher called an extraordinary session of the Assembly in January, 1861, for the express purpose of deciding for or against secession. The Assembly, apparently unwilling to assume full responsibility for such a drastic move, issued a call for a convention to be held in February.

Ritchie and Pleasants counties were united into a delegate district, and in the election held February 4 Cyrus Hall of Ritchie was chosen a member of the State convention. On April 17 an ordinance providing for secession was passed by the convention, Cyrus Hall voting for it. The ordinance provided that the matter should be left to a vote of the people, at an election to be held May 23. Of the forty-seven members of the convention representing the counties now composing West Virginia thirty-two voted against the secession ordinance, but two of them afterwards changed their votes. In the election of May 23 Pleasants county gave 158 votes for the secession ordinance and 363 against it.

In the meantime the sentiment against a division of the Union had become so far crystalized that a convention was called to be held at Wheeling, May 13, known afterward as the First Wheeling Convention. Delegates to this convention were chosen mostly at mass meetings of the citizens, and Pleasants was represented by Friend Cochran, Robert T. Parker, R. A. Cramer and James W. Williamson.

The first convention merely paved the way for a second convention, to which the members were elected by popular vote instead of being chosen at mass meetings. The Pleasants and Ritchie district sent James W. Williamson as member of the House of Delegates, and C. W. Smith and William Douglas as delegates to the convention. This body met in Wheeling June 11, 1861, and provided for the formation of the new State of Kanawha, the name being changed afterward to West Virginia.

The Third Wheeling Convention met in that city November 26, 1861, for the purpose of preparing a constitution for the new State. Pleasants county sent Joseph Hubbs as its representative. The following February the convention finished its work, the constitution was submitted to the voters, who ratified it by an almost unanimous vote April 11, 1862. In Pleasants the vote was 322 for ratification of the constitution and only two ballots against it.

This vote is rather surprising in view of the fact that at the other election more than one-third of the voters had expressed themselves as in favor of secession; but perhaps

it may be partially accounted for by the rapid progress of the war, the practice of intimidation usual in such cases, and the virtual disfranchisement of voters.

The Unionists were in a large majority; every person suspected of sympathizing with the Confederacy was under strict surveillance, and prevented, if possible from voting. An example is taken from the Browse Journal:

Three days before the election on the constitution, James Ruckman, John Hammett, Thomas Browse and his son, Robert H. Browse, were required to report to Captain Myers at St. Marys and were confined in the guard house. Joseph Powell was brought in also on the day of the election. On April 12 they were put on board the Eagle, under guard of Lieutenant Ross, and taken to Wheeling. A stop was made at Grape Island to gather up all the fire arms to be found there—two double-barreled shot guns, a rifle, two flint-lock pistols and two revolvers.

At Wheeling they were placed in the Atheneum as prisoners with about one hundred others. James Barker, Thomas Seckman and David Houser, all of Pleasants, were added to the party. On the 19th the men from this county were taken before Judge John J. Jackson of the Federal Court, and were released after taking the oath to support the constitution and having given securities. They returned home on the steamer Liberty. Being taken up by the Eagle and brought back by the Liberty sounds like poetic justice.

Whatever men might think, they had to be very careful as to what they said. Such a thing as freedom of expression in time of war is unknown. Nicholas Wells, who resided above Bens Run, happened to remark that it "was an Abolition war from the beginning," and that was cause sufficient to arrest him and take him to Parkersburg, where he was compelled to take the oath and to give a security of one thousand dollars.

This section was not troubled with actual hostilities, although on one occasion there was a raid made by Confederates. On October 26, 1863, a small body of Confederate soldiers suddenly descended upon St. Marys, where they are reported to have destroyed ninety muskets, captured twenty-five citizens, whom they released, and then departed down the river road with horses

taken from Pethel, Hubbs, Gallaher, Patterson, Creel and Boylen.

Always the people were in dread of these raids, and it is said that several citizens buried their silverware and cash on the island. At the slightest rumor, too, some would cross the river into Ohio and remain there until all danger was reported over. When Morgan made his celebrated cavalry dash through southern Ohio it was supposed that he might attempt to cross back to the southern side of the river at Grape Island, where the river was fordable in low water, so a company of fifty soldiers under Lieutenant Howe came on July 23, 1863, and occupied the river bank near the Browse home. The men remained there four days, until news came of Morgan's capture not far from Steubenville.

In September, 1862, Mr. Browse records going on the steamer Science to Wheeling and meeting a Miss Wilson on the boat. She had been teaching school at Sistersville, but was dismissed because of her suspected sympathies, receiving the following note:

"Sistersville, Va., August 29, 1862

"Miss Wilson:

"At the instance of the citizens of this place I have considered the circumstance of your station here and have concluded that it would be best for you to give up the idea of teaching here. You will leave this county by the first boat.

"Respectfully,

"Edgar Boyers, Provost Marshal."

As the war proceeded, there were continual demands for enlistments, and in order to help the Federal government as much as possible the counties of the new State of West Virginia laid levies for funds with which to pay bounties to the enlisted men. For this purpose Pleasants county raised the sum of \$37,900—a very large amount, considering the then limited resources of the county and the sparse population.

Later, the drafting plan was put into effect, and in September, 1864, the following were drafted into the Union army from Pleasants county:

Twenty-second Subdistrict—Brady Lemaster, George D. Stout, William Locke, Charles E. Locke, William M. Severs, Rodney Reynolds, Sylvester Wilson, John S. Morgan, Frederick Shafer, John Virden, Jeremiah McCune, John Kelley, William C. Ruttencutter, Thomas J. Birkhimer, Joseph Rice, Job Smith, Jacob Idonise, George Kechaline, Crayton Flesher, Isaac B. Cox, Joseph Bookman, Elias J. Satterfield, Joshua Lamp, Joshua R. Ruttencutter, Abraham Ruttencutter, Calvin Campbell, Robert Stanley, Albert A. Stephens, Thomas H. Hart, Paul King, Andrew M. Seckman, John W. Gatrell, Joseph Mason, John Arn, Isaac Holland, Benjamim F. Seckman, Joseph Reynolds, Jacob Speece, Jacob Dearth, John F. Hart, Reuben Wright, Geo. W. Reynolds, Jr., John W. Riggs and David Cunningham.

Twenty-third Subdistrict—William Wilson, Harvey Hendershot, James E. Robinson, Samuel C. Hammett, John Bryson, Marion Cochran, William Malone, William F. Robinson, James Carney, Abel Bonar, Lewis Gibboney, William Outward, Joseph H. Kester, John G. Wigner, George F. Wiseman, Israel B. Smith, William Kester, James E. Reynolds, Austin G. Wells, Joseph Brown, Francis M. Irwin, Newman Wilson, George S. Hammett, Charles Robinson, David Rawson, Daniel Corbin, Charles I. Wood, David Gregg, Jacob Lemley, Abram Joy, John W. Norris and Emanuel Smith.

These men reported at the Atheneum Theater in Wheeling.

Mr. Browse tells of being at Wheeling in the latter part of that month and seeing a large number of drafted men from other places, some being able to escape the service by hiring substitutes, paying in some instances as high as one thousand dollars. There were scamps who made a practice of accepting bounties and then evading the service who after the war were stigmatized with the term of "bounty jumpers."