Writing West Virginia: A.W. Campbell Jr., A Biography

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This dissertation titled
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Abstract

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Writing West Virginia: A.W. Campbell Jr., A Biography

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The life of Archibald W. Campbell Jr. intertwined with the press, the formation of a new state, the growth of West Virginia, and vast changes to the United States over a dynamic half century. Campbell’s life story provides a prism through which is revealed a spectrum of social, as well as personal meaning during the period from 1855 to 1899. The journey sheds new light on the role of the press in West Virginia’s formation and early development and uncovers human virtues and imperfections of a man who was integral to the improbable realization of statehood at a time when the region was critical to the country’s survival.
Dedication

For Gerry, who believed in me when I doubted and helped me to continue focusing on my goal.
Acknowledgments

Appreciation is due Professor Michael S. Sweeney for his thoughtful guidance, encouragement, and consummate professionalism. When he had many other priorities, he always made me feel as if I was at the top of the list.
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Chapter 1: 1855—Meet Archibald Campbell

It always has seemed to me that each human being, before going out into the silence, should leave behind him, not the story of his own life, but of the time in which he lived, —as he saw it—its creed, its purpose, its queer habits, and the work which it did or left undone in the world.
— Rebecca Harding Davis, *Bits of Gossip*

Kinderhook, New York, seemed an out-of-the-way destination for young Archibald Campbell Jr. on July 27, 1855. After spending a year studying law at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, the route to his home in northwestern Virginia stretched nearly five hundred miles to the south and west. But the small town of Kinderhook lay more than one hundred miles to the east, just south of the state capital, Albany.

Although Kinderhook once had been isolated, by midcentury a rail line ran through the town. After arriving at the station, Campbell would have to continue two miles outside of the town, probably on foot. None of these factors deterred him because the twenty-two-year-old was on a personal mission, guided by a keen interest in politics. He planned to call at Lindenwald, the home of Martin Van Buren, hoping to meet the former president.

Archie, as Campbell was known to friends and family, was a newly minted attorney, one of just five graduates the day before, July 26, from Hamilton’s inaugural class of the institution’s law school.¹ Although some additional institutions had begun to include study relevant to legal practice by 1855, in 1850 there had been only fifteen law schools in the nation.² Most formal legal education of the time was more suited for the preparation of future statesmen than legal practitioners, who normally “read law,”
studying under the wing of an established attorney. Law schools such as Hamilton were reserved for a privileged few.

Archie had been raised within that social stratum, by a family of means accustomed to mingling with famous men and being in the public spotlight. His uncle, Alexander Campbell, along with his grandfather, Thomas Campbell, had established the Disciples of Christ Church—also known as the Campbellites—and traveled throughout the nation preaching the gospel and teaching the church’s tenets. Archie had been a favorite nephew of his Uncle Alexander, who also was well-known for his expertise about the principles of education and for establishing Bethany College, at Bethany, Virginia. In addition, Alexander published the *Millennial Harbinger*, a widely read religious magazine. Archie’s father, Archibald, was first and foremost a physician, but he was also a preacher and edited his brother’s publication. Archie’s mother, born Phebe Clapp, was from a well-educated New England family who had moved to and become solidly established in Mentor, Ohio. Archie’s maternal grandfather, Orris Clapp, was a judge; his uncle Matthew Clapp, an Ohio legislator; and his uncle, John Milton Clapp, graduated from Yale before becoming editor in the 1840s of the South Carolina *Charleston Mercury* and the *Southern Quarterly*. There was an expectation that Archie, a bright young man who had been encouraged to read broadly and who had received a fine education at Bethany College, also would become successful.

The path he was eager to follow may not have been what his family had foreseen for his future, but his determination to visit Van Buren provided a revealing glimpse into his own ambitions. Van Buren was a master in the world of politics, a world with which young Archie was fascinated and which he aspired to enter. Even so, at the time he called
upon the president, Archie had no way of knowing the role that awaited him in the political drama surrounding the creation of West Virginia and first quarter-century of its development, or exactly what skills it would require of him. He was not yet aware he would record history in the pages of the newspaper he would soon purchase, or that he would become a party leader and businessman who helped to make the history newspapers would publish. His excursion on that day in 1855 was simply to meet a man in whom he was interested, without having a full awareness of the relevance that Van Buren’s example in party organization would hold for him in upcoming years.

Van Buren had been a political powerhouse over the previous half-century, serving as a U.S. senator from New York; vice president and secretary of state under President Andrew Jackson; and eighth president of the United States. Long before those accomplishments he was well established in local and state politics. At age seventeen he had been a delegate to a political convention and he had learned early how to coordinate multiple ethnic and political groups. As he moved from local to state politics, he gained fame as a political organizer and an accomplished lawyer. During the early part of the nineteenth century, when there were generally two factions in New York politics, Van Buren always led one element and the other opposed him; his allies were dubbed the Albany Regency. In the 1820s and 1830s, Van Buren served as a key advisor to President Jackson and was the prime architect of the Democratic Party, the first nationwide political party. After Van Buren’s reorganization and unification of the party behind Jackson, the New York American, which supported the opponent, editorialized, “Organization is the secret of victory. By the want of it we have been overthrown.”
The subject of successful party organization would soon become relevant to Archie’s future as an outgrowth of his interest in the recently established Republican Party. Van Buren’s personal view of slavery also reflected that of Campbell’s of an institution that was sanctioned by the Constitution, but that he personally considered to be immoral.8

Regardless of his motivation, Campbell left Lindenwald carrying tangible evidence of the success of his mission. “With my kind respects,” the aging president wrote above his signature on the note given to Campbell that day. It remained in Campbell’s pocket book over the next four years, perhaps reminding him of Van Buren’s lesson that “organization is the secret to victory.” When Campbell decided to no longer carry the note daily, the treasure was stored safely away, with the dates and significance noted on it in Campbell’s handwriting.9

The Van Buren visit, however, wasn’t Campbell’s only, or even his first, audacious exploration of the political landscape. While in law school at Clinton, he traveled throughout the state via the Great Central railroad, which passed within nine miles of the institution. Among his stops was the city of Auburn, the residence of Senator William H. Seward, who Campbell believed commanded “the fervent admiration of a large and more intelligent class than any other living statesman.”10

“It was my good fortune to find seated in his study that great statesman,” Campbell said of his stop in Auburn. “It happened also that Senator Sumner being on a speaking tour was his guest at this time.”11

Like Van Buren, both Seward and Charles Sumner of Massachusetts were accomplished politicians, albeit of a different stripe than the former president. Sumner
had entered the Senate as a member of the Free Soil Party, which focused solely on opposition to the expansion of slavery into the western territories, claiming that free men on free soil comprised a morally and economically superior system to slavery. He was a sought-after orator; “a perfect picture of a man . . . some six feet two inches in height” according to Campbell, with “the reputation of being one of the most polished and critical of American scholars.”

While in Auburn, Campbell attended Sumner’s speech on the antislavery movement, a movement that was necessary, Sumner said, “on the ground of humanity and of expediency . . . the most effectual method of enlisting the attention of the American people.” One year later Sumner was violently assaulted and beaten with a cane on the Senate floor after one of his impassioned speeches against slavery.

In Campbell’s estimation there was a “close sympathy of feeling . . . on so many questions of public interest” between Sumner and Seward, and both influenced Campbell’s political leanings. Early in his career Campbell had written that Seward’s 1854 re-election to the Senate was “on every hand . . . hailed as a great moral victory—a triumph of liberalized humanity.” And many years later, in front of the national Republican convention of 1880, it was Seward whom Campbell credited, claiming to have “imbibed my [Republican] principles from the great statesman, William H. Seward, with whom I had an early acquaintance.”

During his career, Seward served as a state senator and governor of New York, US senator, and US secretary of state for both Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. Each office was won as a member of a different political party, often in direct opposition to Van Buren’s politics. Early in his career Seward had supported the Van Buren faction of New York politics, but he soon broke away because he believed the
Albany Regency was corrupt. Afterward he joined the Anti-Masonic party, which nominated him for a seat in the New York State Senate. That party became closely associated with opposition to Andrew Jackson, for whom Van Buren was a top advisor. After Jackson was re-elected in 1832 the Whig party was formed in opposition to Jackson’s policies and Seward joined the new party. When Van Buren ran for president in 1836 as a Democrat, Seward campaigned against him. After Van Buren won the election, the Panic of 1837 hit and Seward used the issue of the economy to defeat and break Van Buren’s Albany Regency in the 1838 New York governor’s race. Again in 1855 Seward switched parties when the New York Whig and Republican parties merged. Seward, who was attracted by the Republican Party’s antislavery stance, was the most prominent figure to join the new Republican Party.

Campbell, a Whig, also was drawn by the new party’s stance on slavery. Of equal importance to Campbell was the party’s vision to modernize the United States through a “Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men” ideology, which included expanded banking, more railroads and factories, free-market labor, and free western land for farmers. He was eager to emulate the political leadership qualities he observed in Van Buren, Sumner, and Seward, and saw the new Republican Party as an opportunity to do so.

At least five months before he made calls upon these notable politicians, Campbell had begun to test his hand at political commentary by providing correspondence to Pennsylvania’s Washington Reporter, in the town where he was raised until the age of sixteen. He referred to the “old Reporter” as “one of the household gods of my early recollections, and the intimate associate of my literary dawning.” The newspaper’s editor introduced the new correspondent as “a young gentleman of ability,”
but compared his handwriting to Horace Greeley’s, “which is so renowned for its illegibility!!”

Nevertheless, Campbell’s preoccupation with politics and his talent for composition were a good match. “Sometimes I think writing naturally is as much an inherent spark as the genius of poetry,” he wrote in an early column for the *Reporter*. The influence of Seward’s politics and the new Republican Party’s doctrine were evident in his first piece for the *Reporter*, in February of 1855, written while Campbell was still a law student.

“Like alternate booming of distant cannon, come the result *sic* of the Senatorial elections; and one after another, we see new recruits added to Freedom’s Legion of Honor in the next Congress. . . . Seward [and others] already, and yet we look for others of the same determined principles,” he wrote. The column closed with his initials, A.W.C. These three letters would become his trademark signature at the end of many private correspondences and some published works, although he more often ended the latter with a simple C.

In this first published piece, A.W.C. also revealed his view of ideal newspaper content. Beginning a year later, in 1856, as owner and editor of the Wheeling *Intelligencer*, he would shape a newspaper based on these principles.

“The people familiarized not only with the passing events of the day, but with the abstruse *sic*—the curious, the useful and beautiful in history and general literature, Poetry *sic*—drama and actual fact learning are in turn treated of, and the people are led into the recesses of learning,” Campbell declared. The columns of his newspaper, especially his editorials, would be filled with literary and historical references and written
to educate, as well as to inform and entertain. According to his words and his actions, Campbell held that “minds are led from the superficial outline given them to study the topics in detail.”

In a critique of three major New York publications—the Tribune, the Herald and the Daily Times (now the New York Times), Campbell applied keen observation and critical analysis in formulating his vision of what a good newspaper should be and why it was important. Campbell viewed the press as an integral part of the functioning world in which it operated and expressed an understanding of the vast network of “agencies which play into the hands of . . . daily press and make it what it is.” Along with the editor, who personally set direction for the publication, the press was served by public improvements, such as “telegraphs forming a network from Maine to Texas” and “grand trunk railways diverging to and connecting with those of every point of the compass.” He postulated that “whatever is great in interest, be it fancy or practical, whether from abroad or home . . . seeks an outlet to the eyes of American millions.”

The trinity of New York publications critiqued was just such an outlet. Campbell’s view of the Times was one of an “unexaggerated mirror . . . of passing events,” rating it as “one of the most truth-telling—conservative journals in the land.” But he castigated the Herald and Tribune, likening the alternate reading of them to “a tongue race between two Billingsgate market women,” stating the newspapers both seemed to be “in the habit of clipping all the strong invectives of the language, and then endeavor[ing] to see who can crowd the most of them into any one article.” However, he acknowledged that the Tribune, published by the moralizing Horace Greeley, also had “sterling virtues” and had “shown itself the friend of the friendless” by being devoted to
the interests of the masses and democratic governmental principles. Campbell shuddered “at the power, passing all conception, which a vitiated press may wield for woe over the destinies of the country.”

Journalism, Campbell stated, “is one of the most striking features in this age . . . and the historian who comes to note the agencies of the constantly revolutionizing individualism and nationalism of this day, must needs give it more than a passing paragraph.” As “exponents of the spirit of the age” Campbell believed newspapers, particularly the three New York publications critiqued, wielded an “incredible amount of power over the American mind.”

Twentieth century historians have concurred that the nineteenth century press was powerful. In Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth Century America, Hazel Dicken-Garcia discussed the effects of the press of that period on public opinion, stating that critics of the time believed the press molded and controlled public opinion.

Using that influence for good, Campbell expressed, the press should go “hand in hand with a refining morality.” To do so, he added, the press should be under the “charge of men who can combine the intelligence of the day with a style and ideas which will both [sic] interest, exalt and ennoble the popular mind; which will infuse the motive power of principle into the reform movements of the age.”

Nearly 150 years later, the authors of Fanatics and Fire-eaters: Newspapers and the Coming of the Civil War concluded that newspapers of that period did, indeed, influence people’s action. While the press often reinforced readers’ traditional values and attitudes, it sometimes also tore down what defined and sustained a midnineteenth-century American community.
The effects of building and razing those social mores were often seen most clearly through politics. The nineteenth-century press was a predominantly partisan press; therefore, the substance of content followed suit. According to Gerald Baldasty’s *Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century*, half of the content of antebellum metropolitan newspapers dealt with politics and specifically with editors’ view of readers as voters, for which the press provided the content that “would woo them to a particular party and mobilize them to vote.” In *Blue & Gray in Black & White: Newspapers of the Civil War*, Brayton Harris reported the 1860 census classified 80 percent of U.S. newspapers as “political in their character,” with many being supported and subsidized by office holders, office seekers, or local government printing contracts in exchange for well-positioned coverage. David Mindich stated in *Just the Facts: How “Objectivity” Came to Define American Journalism*, an editor could not be nonpartisan if his main source of income was a single political party, but as party patronage became less accessible, they wrote more nonpartisan news stories. Mindich contends that even nonpartisan publications with editors interested in the government participated in nonpartisanship in different and distinct ways that aligned them with political issues.

Those political issues can be divided into three regions, Daniel Hallin explained in *The “Uncensored War,” the Media and Vietnam*, which can be illustrated by concentric circles of objectivity representing consensus, legitimate controversy and deviance of public disposition on a topic. These regions help journalists to mark out and defend the limits of acceptable political conflict, Hallin stated.

In the years leading up to the Civil War, when Campbell was choosing his path, or it was choosing him, the connection between the press and politics was quite appealing
to a young man who had strong opinions, a flair for writing, and a desire to be one of the
movers and shakers of political circles. But within the partisan setting of the era, the press
often made little separation between fact and opinion—information came attached to a
perspective. Even nonpartisan newspapers and those editors who masked their own
preferences for a political party took distinct stances.\textsuperscript{40} That perspective often resulted in
journalism that the idealistic and inexperienced Campbell considered unacceptable.

“Journalists hardly ever write about things as most people would see them,” he
said, claiming that among some writers “there is, or seems to be, an insatiable itching
after something starting and paradoxical in narration: facts are all glazed over with the
vagaries of the author; common place narration is totally ignored in deference to a morbid
thirst for sentiment.”\textsuperscript{41}

Campbell’s inherent sense that newspapers should be trustworthy did not negate
his belief that they should be interesting and informative. He would never be one of the
men whose writings “if striped [\textit{sic}] of the unnatural and the untrue, would dwindle down
to the never read recitals of a patent office report.”\textsuperscript{42}

Regardless of the perspective and trustworthiness, or lack thereof, content was
broadly disseminated to multiple press outlets via telegraph lines carrying news from
cooperatives such as the newly formed Associated Press as well as exchange of
newspapers through the U.S. Post Office. Campbell described the rapidity with which the
news spread across the country, as compared with the days- or weeks-long delays only
twenty-five years earlier, before telegraph and rails were ubiquitous.

At an early hour in the morning, the trains leaving the cities and large towns all
over the Union, carry with them tons of news, fresh, almost, at the hour of
starting, from the tick of the Telegraph, and before night one half of the American
people are better posted upon the latest occurrences in far off cities—or the most recent massacre by the Comanche Indians than in the news of their immediate neighborhood.43

Although the news spread rapidly, this improved distribution network often resulted in uniformity of news among newspapers receiving identical dispatches, regardless of the political orientation. Acceptance of wire dispatches as news led to uncritical, unselective use of information, according to a study of early wire-service usage by Susan Brooker-Gross, published in *Journalism Quarterly*. 44 And while it was not a new practice to clip news from other publications and run those pieces without changes, the speed with which news became stale was accelerated, encouraging editors to seek ways to include the latest news without the added time and effort of rewriting. In a content analysis of the press coverage of West Virginia’s birth in 1863, presented to the American Journalism Historians Association in 2012 by Linda Lockhart, nearly one-half of the news items studied included attribution to a news source other than the newspaper in which the story was printed.45

Despite these shortcomings the press captivated Campbell as a reader, as an aspiring statesman, and especially as a writer. With his purchase of the *Intelligencer* in 1856, he took on a lifetime role that indelibly linked him to current events and, ultimately, to those who held power. In his dissertation, “The Influence of the Press in the Making of West Virginia,” John Lewis Kiplinger called Campbell “West Virginia’s greatest journalist.”46 Campbell’s individuality was “impressed upon almost every page of West Virginia’s first twenty years of history,” according to a tribute issue of the *Intelligencer* printed upon his death in 1899. “With voice and pen he was heard and felt, and largely followed during the early years of . . . statehood.”47
Those early years of West Virginia’s existence were dramatic. During 1861, as the United States was rent by secession, Virginia passed a resolution to join other Confederate states in rebellion against the Union. In utter disagreement with the decision, a group of loyal Unionists in the western part of Virginia immediately began a battle to legitimize their right to remain in the Union.

For many years Virginia had been divided into two sections, east and west. The mountainous western counties of the state were physically separated by the Allegheny Mountains from eastern Virginia’s center of government and power. But this natural barrier wasn’t the only division; economies were different, as well. The western portion of the state was less agricultural and the mountainous terrain was less conducive to profitable use of slave labor, which was the norm for large plantations and farms in the east. Instead, Western Virginia had developed industries and commercial businesses that supplied states to the north, east, and west, despite the state having made little investment in improvements, such as roads, in the west. The two sections quarreled over taxation rates, which favored the eastern counties, and levels of government representation. When the question of secession from the Union arose after the election of Abraham Lincoln, the sections differed on that point, too. Eastern Virginia identified with the southern states; Western Virginia had more in common with the North. When the government in the capital of Richmond, in eastern Virginia, decided to join the Confederacy, loyal Unionists in Western Virginia saw an opportunity for independence, but it was an opportunity fraught with possible failure.

The Western Virginians wanted to form a new state. The U.S. Constitution, however, required such an action be approved by the parent state of Virginia. The eastern
Virginia government was unlikely to give approval to losing part of its territory and the resources contained therein, but the Richmond government had declared secession from the federal government. Reasoning that their Virginia—the eastern counties—was still part of the union, a group of Western Virginians stepped up as the acting government of the state in what was to be known as the Restored State of Virginia.\textsuperscript{49}

The group of western leaders employed legal wit and public sentiment to escalate this intrastate cleavage to a national agenda issue in order to gain support for their ultimate desire to create a new state. The group positioned the case for separate statehood in a persuasive light on the point that entry of the new state of West Virginia into the Union was not only legal, since the Restored Government of Virginia could approve the action, but it was necessary to maintain the Union.

Campbell, who had been a debater at Bethany College and spent his days in law school having to present cogent and detailed oral arguments to the class whenever called upon, possessed legal wit, strong communication skills, and a powerful instrument of persuasion, the press. Considering his political views, it was not surprising that he became a central figure in the statehood movement.

Described as a man who was “the leading spirit in West Virginia” by Granville Davisson Hall, Campbell’s former employee at the \textit{Intelligencer} and the author of \textit{The Rending of Virginia}, Campbell has been included in most major works about West Virginia’s history.\textsuperscript{50} Charles Ambler, Virgil Lewis, James Morton Callahan, and William P. Willey described the state’s beginning in books written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including Campbell as part of the state’s story.\textsuperscript{51} George Atkinson published \textit{Prominent Men of West Virginia} in 1890, prior to Campbell’s death, including
a brief biographical section about the editor’s professional life.\textsuperscript{52} More recent biographical sketches of Campbell refer to these early works, including versions in the online West Virginia Encyclopedia, e-WV, and the Library of Virginia’s online classroom, “Union or Secession: Virginian’s Decide.”\textsuperscript{53}

Twentieth-century scholars have focused more often on the \textit{Intelligencer}, depending on Campbell’s printed words to study the state’s historical beginnings, but with little depth into the subject of Campbell’s life beyond his editorship in the years 1861 to 1863. Little has been written about Campbell’s continued role as editor and owner of the newspaper, or his accomplishments as a successful business man in iron, oil, and banking for the remainder of the nineteenth century, all of which impacted West Virginia’s development and growth. After statehood was achieved, he continued to be a political leader in the Republican Party, gaining national notoriety in 1880 during the Republican Convention at which James Garfield was nominated as a presidential candidate. Throughout his life Campbell traveled widely across the United States and Europe, often writing long, detailed, and informative reports about his visits, to be published in the \textit{Intelligencer}.

Like many journalists, Campbell’s fame is largely a derivative of much larger events, issues, historical forces and personalities that he witnessed and chronicled. However, his life was not static; more than a journalist, he was surrounded by people whose lives evolved alongside his. Those social networks were a crucial part of his story and the story of his times. Within this broad social context, in which Campbell grappled with public and private complex issues, his life provides a glimpse into the process of historical change.
From 1855, when he first wrote political correspondence for the *Washington Reporter*, until 1899 when he died at the age of sixty-six, Campbell’s life intertwined with the press and the growth of West Virginia. The particulars of his life are a prism that reveals social as well as personal meaning during a dynamic time in the country’s and the state’s history. Combining personal and social into a history that exhibits that era sheds new light on the role of the press in West Virginia’s birth and early development, as well as tells the story of a man who was integral to the improbable realization of statehood at a time when that region was critical to the country’s survival.

Several discoveries, beyond the facade presented of Campbell in earlier histories, remain to be made. For example, Campbell’s life from a broader, but more personal perspective improves understanding of how he and the *Intelligencer* contributed to achieving statehood and developing the newly formed state. Was the staunch support of the paper a result of a young editor being swept up in the frenzy of the times, or was the newspaper intentionally employed by the group of founding fathers to influence public opinion in ways that helped them achieve their goals?

To discover whether other newspapers followed the lead of Campbell’s *Intelligencer* on the statehood issue and how national and regional press framed the movement, a content analysis study was conducted to analyze press coverage during 1861 in four regions of the country, North, South, West, and Western Virginia. Using a frame analysis to examine the selection and salience of certain aspects of the issue the study employed a two-dimensional measurement scheme as a systematic way of examining frame-changing—reframing the core topic by emphasizing different attributes at different times within the period—seeking to identify shifting patterns that indicate
legitimization of the intrastate rift as a national agenda issue. Additionally the study examined whether frame change patterns in the regions of study followed similar patterns. Further analysis included that of frames used to descriptively characterize the actions undertaken as part of the Western Virginia movement and identification of the source of news published. This analysis provides insight into the power of the press to persuade while learning more about the *Intelligencer’s* role as a primary source of news.

A.W. Campbell’s life story, however, goes beyond the role of the press and the history of West Virginia. Because he was involved and engaged with the world about him, his life story exhibits an age. After the Civil War Campbell was engaged in the attempts, during Reconstruction, to mend local, national, and personal wounds that were a bitter aftermath of war. As his professional outlook expanded into industry and investments, he accumulated wealth and became actively involved in many of the dominant issues of a period dubbed, by Mark Twain, as the Gilded Age. Industrialization, labor unions, education, tariffs, and two nationwide depressions helped to shape the trajectory of his life. His story is a view into the American past.

A consummate survey of that bygone era requires an exploration of the interaction between the public and the private in Campbell’s life. On one hand, his story is one of the broad historical culture within which he functioned, on the other, it is a tale of profoundly local and individual dimensions. Fortunately, not only was Campbell a journalist, penning his thoughts for the world to consume, he also was a prolific correspondent. He frequently wrote eloquent letters to his family, friends, and colleagues and he received expressive, and often personal, responses. Manuscripts that document personal experiences, joys, sorrows, and disappointments are included in the Campbell and
Patterson Family Papers in the Denver Public Library’s Western History Collection, while West Virginia University’s West Virginia and Regional History Center holds the Archibald W. Campbell Papers, Jane Campbell Dawson’s Diary, and the Jessie Campbell-Nave Diaries. The Campbell Collection of extended family documents, at Bethany College, provides perspective into Campbell’s roots and personal character.

Significant business, political, and personal documents which bear Campbell’s signature can be found throughout the files of several well-known men of his day. Collections of importance include the Abraham Lincoln Papers, Robert Todd Lincoln Collection of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, and the James A. Garfield Papers at the Library of Congress. West Virginia Regional and History Center’s Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers, Granville Davisson Hall Papers, Hubbard Family Papers, Waitman T. Willey Papers, John Mason Papers, and Arthur I. Boreman Papers provide access to many of Campbell’s correspondences. The Virginia Governor Executive Papers of Governor Francis H. Pierpont at the Library of Virginia and the Papers of William Henry Seward at the University of Rochester make significant contributions to information about Campbell. The West Virginia Archives and History contain several primary documents specific to history of the statehood movement, as well as microfilm copies of several of the period newspapers and recorded documents, including Campbell’s will.

The pages of the *Intelligencer* are an especially rich source of information about Campbell’s opinions and period context. A nearly complete collection of copies of the *Intelligencer* can be accessed through the Library of Congress’s online resource Chronicling America, Historic American Newspapers. Additionally, the West Virginia
and Regional History Center houses microfilm copies of the *Intelligencer* and most other newspapers that were published in the region during the study period.

Campbell’s personal character did not always fit comfortably with his professional persona and his first job, within months after finishing law school, tested his mettle. Archie began working in the family business, traveling the country to collect money for subscriptions to support Bethany College, the institution established by his Uncle Alexander.

“I have not yet got properly to work,” he reported in November of 1855, “but have collected nearly two hundred dollars,” observing that “there were a good many subscribed who never ought, as they were really at the time in, what might be called, destitute circumstances.”

In his next report, Campbell expressed his internal conflict. “Sometimes I find a 25 dollar subscriber squatted on some out of the way hill side [sic]. The half dressed [sic] children flee at my approach and hide themselves behind their primitive chairs and doors, and it really takes all . . . I can command to speak to them of a 25-dollar charity, when apparently their whole clock of chattels & goods including their 8 by 10 half chinked cabin would hardly buy it.”

It was, perhaps, the first professional opportunity for Campbell to speak up about what he believed was right, but it certainly was not the last. Multiple times in the future, often to his own detriment, Campbell opposed popular public actions that he thought to be unfair, defied his party, and defended people he did not necessarily like.

Campbell’s work as a collector was short-lived. In May 1856 he became the city editor of the Wheeling *Intelligencer*, a newspaper edited and owned by J. H. Pendleton.
Campbell, at age twenty-three, moved from the quiet town of Bethany, where he had been surrounded by family and like-minded Cambellites, to the city of Wheeling. Although he was less than twenty-five miles from home, his sister, Jane, who was five years younger, wrote faithfully, as she would when they were apart throughout his life.

“I suppose you attend quite a round of parties now,” said Jane, envious of his big-city social opportunities. “Or rather that there are a good many for I doubt if you attend many,” she wrote, acknowledging his less enthusiastic social nature.58

However, as a journalist, Campbell’s personal attributes and professional abilities were soon to coalesce. The readers would witness the fulfillment of a future predicted by the editor of the Washington Reporter in an announcement that the former correspondent, known as A.W.C., had joined the Intelligencer’s editorial department. “We doubt not but that Mr. Campbell will prove a valuable acquisition to the paper.”59

This study will follow Campbell’s life story with a view to gain perspective through his experiences about a period of vast change in U.S. history. The journey will endeavor to reveal some of Campbell’s human virtues and imperfections while exploring the impact his life had on the world in which he lived.

A good network helped Campbell to establish a free, nonpartisan press in Virginia. However, fortitude and perseverance were required to keep it running and eventually make it pay. Focusing on 1856 to 1859, chapter two examines how Campbell and the Intelligencer created a space for opposing views and civil debate in antebellum Virginia, although making the newspaper a paying proposition required almost five years and a network of professional and political supporters. In 1859 and 1860 Campbell
embraced his adopted city and demonstrated his personal values through actions, which provides the focus for chapter three.

With the secession crisis in 1861, Campbell employed his press to define the battle as one of principle and to advocate for what he believed to be right. Campbell’s stance and a view of the press of Western Virginia in shaping opinion about the movement for statehood, which he strongly advocated, constitute chapters four (spring 1861) and five (May-June 1861). In chapters six and seven the actions related to realizing West Virginia statehood and the environment in which those actions were taken are a focus during the period from mid-1861 through early 1863.

Chapter eight focuses on Campbell’s personal life as the Civil War ended and reconstruction began, from 1865 to 1868, and chapter nine continues with a personal focus on Campbell in relation to his political aspirations between 1868 and 1871. In 1872 Campbell began a decade-long phase of his life in which he became wealthy, powerful, socially esteemed, and lived a life typical of a man of means in the Gilded Age. Changes that took place in society during 1872 to 1882 and how those changes manifested in Campbell’s life constitute chapter ten. In chapter eleven, Campbell’s concluding years, 1882-1899, serve to pinpoint significant considerations about his life and the times in which he lived.

Notes

9. “Personal Note from Martin Van Buren,” July 26, 1855, Archibald W. Campbell (1839-1899), Newspaperman Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries. Hereafter identified as AWC.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
25. Delf Norona and Charles Shetler, *West Virginia Imprints, 1790-1863; A Checklist of Books, Newspapers, Periodicals, and Broadsides*, vol. 1 (Moundsville, WV: West Virginia Library Association, 1958), 260. The *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* was established August 24, 1852. The newspaper also published a weekly edition, beginning on September 17, 1852. On November 12, 1859 the publication changed title to become the *Daily Intelligencer*. The publication will be referred to as the *Intelligencer* throughout this manuscript, except in notes where it will be referred to as the *Wheeling Intelligencer* to avoid confusion with other publications of similar title.
27. Campbell, March 28, 1855.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
34. Campbell, March 28, 1855.


39. Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 117. Hallin called the regions spheres. The Sphere of Consensus encompasses subjects not regarded by most of society as controversial. The limits within the Sphere of Legitimate Controversy are defined primarily by the party system’s parameters of debate and the decision-making process of the executive branch of government. Views and actors viewed by the political mainstream as unworthy of being heard exist within the sphere of Deviance.


42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.


49. *The Chicago Manual of Style*, Sixteenth Edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 404–6. The Chicago Manual, section 8.46, states that when capitalizing national regions “exceptions based on specific regional, political, or historical contexts are inevitable and the author’s strong preference should usually be respected.” The manual goes on to specify that when writing about the Civil War period, it is customary to capitalize South and North, as well as Southern and Northern, in reference to groups of states that seceded from the Union or remained within it. Further, 8.50 designates that political divisions are capitalized. During the period studied, the region known nationally as Western Virginia was part of a Southern seceded state, Virginia, but remained loyal to and was recognized by the Union North. As such, it was a political subdivision that did not neatly fit the North-South dichotomy used to designate the political division during the Civil War. The terms Western Virginia and Western Virginians were readily recognized by the general public as a specific political region in the country and were routinely capitalized by the period press. The author has followed the lead of the venerable press of the Civil War period in capitalizing regional reference to Western Virginia and Western Virginian.


57. “A. W. Campbell to W. K. Pendleton,” December 8, 1855, TCC.

58. “Jane Campbell to A. W. Campbell,” November 26, 1858, AWC.

Chapter 2: 1856-1859—The Young Idealist

Somebody says there is a decided difference between perseverance and obstinacy. One is a strong will and the other is a strong won’t.
—Wheeling Daily Intelligencer

In June 1856, shortly after Archie Campbell assumed duties as city editor, the Wheeling Daily Intelligencer printed an extract from the Cincinnati Columbian that presaged Campbell’s future editorial career. The comments added by the Intelligencer claimed that parts of the piece were “painfully true of the whole quill driving craft.”

When the most interesting events are taking place editors are the most busy. They are the daily chroniclers of the world—writers and compilers of history, geography, politics, law, religion, incidents of everyday life, of war, peace, crime, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, literature and love . . . his pockets full of “exchanges,” slips of white paper and pencil stumps—for something may turn upon which to found an “article.”

During the first three years at the Intelligencer, Campbell learned the newspaper business and developed an editorial style that was distinctly his. He forged editorial policy that set the tone for the future of the newspaper and influenced the region, stressing quality over quantity of news, placing minimal importance on political affiliation, and making a concerted effort to include local and regional news in the pages of the paper, while becoming an advocate for city services, local businesses, and cultural events. Campbell’s success required a combination of skill, fortitude, and perseverance, but his entry into the city editor’s seat and, ultimately, his ownership of the Intelligencer owed as much to his network of friends, family, and political relationships as to his talents.

Campbell’s introduction to the Intelligencer offices occurred in May 1856, when Archie was hired as the city editor for the newspaper of Joseph H. Pendleton, who began
editing the *Intelligencer* in 1853, a year after it was established. Pendleton became the owner in 1855. He was a fellow lawyer and alumnus of Bethany College, as well as Campbell’s cousin by marriage. Pendleton’s cousin, William K. Pendleton, was Bethany College’s first professor and later president of the college; he also was one of Campbell’s teachers. Both Pendletons married into Uncle Alexander Campbell’s family; William was the husband of Alexander’s daughter and Joseph of his granddaughter. Like the Campbells, the Pendleton families were part of the small community of Bethany, and Joseph Pendleton was a member of the Bethany College Board of Trustees and a close colleague of Campbell’s Uncle Alexander, traveling with the elder Campbell on institutional business.

In addition to being an editor, Pendleton was a successful lawyer and an astute businessman who described his legal practice as “arduous and time-consuming” labor that prevented his newspaper duties from “bestowing . . . constant thought and labor . . . necessary to eminent success.” When Pendleton’s cousin, Archie, joined the *Intelligencer*, Pendleton had been contemplating for several months the need to “elect between the department editorial and the law.”

The *Intelligencer* had been established as a Whig journal, in 1852, and Pendleton and Campbell had both been members of the Whig Party, favoring modernization, banking, and economic protection to stimulate manufacturing. Even as the Whig Party began to collapse from internal tension over the expansion of slavery into the territories, in 1854, Pendleton and the *Intelligencer* remained loyal. As the party’s demise continued, there was a period of political confusion with national parties crumbling and breaking into splinter groups over the issues of slavery and the expansion of slavery into new
territories and states. With his party of choice disintegrating, Pendleton struggled to find another. He frequently disagreed with the Democrats, although he was aligned with that party in support of slavery. He fervently hated the newly formed Republican Party’s antislavery platform and believed other parties were too narrowly focused. By 1856 he had become an editor without a party, stating in June that “party differences, if they exist, must be forgotten . . . and all patriots must take up arms in a common cause, the cause of the Constitution and the Union.”

As that year’s presidential campaign became more intense—each of five parties had a candidate in the contest—he found maintaining the political middle ground to be an untenable position. When he eventually sided with the Democrats in July, based primarily on his approval of their platform on the slavery issue, his endorsement was less than enthusiastic. Even so, many readers misunderstood or disagreed with the position the former Whig had adopted, which he was “well aware . . . would call down upon us the maledictions of some who prefer party to principles.”

As Pendleton struggled in determining where to place his allegiance, leaders of the fledgling Republican Party were attempting to establish a party presence along the northwestern border of Virginia. The columns of Pendleton’s Intelligencer, while not supportive of the “Black Republicans”—an epithet Pendleton and others frequently used in reference to the party’s stance against the extension of slavery—was not blind to the party’s growth. Pendleton’s newly hired city editor, Campbell, also had been a Whig, but his changing political loyalties swung toward the Republican Party, rather than the Democratic route that Pendleton had taken.

In August the debate between the editors’ chosen parties began to appear more frequently in the pages of the Intelligencer. A lengthy article, written anonymously under
the pen name Justicia, set out an argument in support of the Republican platform, including five propositions. Pendleton devoted his editorial column to a counterplan, displaying his legal acumen. The exchange gave the side-by-side columns a feel of two lawyers in a court debate.\(^{10}\) In this manner, the editors filled nearly one-half page with a relatively balanced comparison of the Republican and Democratic platforms. It was one of a growing number of articles that acknowledged the new Republican Party had some local following, even if Pendleton and his newspaper did not endorse the organization.

In September Campbell’s idol, Senator William H. Seward, was positioned as “pretty much all the practical and effective brains in the political management” for the Republican Party, according to an article clipped from the *Washington Star* that was included in the *Intelligencer*.\(^{11}\) Later that month, the newspaper announced, under the heading “Abolitionists,” that a Republican meeting would be held in Wheeling to form a Republican electoral ticket for Virginia. There were few Republicans in the slave state, except in and around a small sliver of the state wedged between Pennsylvania and Ohio, referred to as the panhandle, where Wheeling was located. Although Pendleton published the meeting announcement, as requested by the nearby *Wellsburg Herald*, his accompanying comments advised the party members to change both time and place, as “Wheeling has no sympathy with this party.”\(^{12}\)

Pendleton’s admonition to the party organizers was ignored and the meeting was held on September 18, after which the editor reported it had taken place without “any bastille demonstrations,” although a menacing group had gathered to intimidate anyone courageous enough to attend. Despite the threats, about one hundred people attended the meeting with the report submitted for publication by the secretary of the convention.
stating the association was “happy to proclaim that those engaged in the mob, and their
endorsers” who were attempting to prevent the Republicans from forming in the city,
“received no countenance from the respectable citizens of Wheeling.”

Campbell was among those who were becoming active in organizing the new
party in the panhandle. In the weeks after the meeting the *Intelligencer* reported
Campbell had been speaking at “opposition meetings.” Pendleton likely wrote the report
and clearly was aware of Campbell’s political involvement with the Republicans.

News of the meeting, referred to as the Republican Virginia State Convention,
made its way into the *New York Times* by way of a published letter from J. Thoburn,
chair of the Republican state executive committee, to John C. Underwood on September
27, 1856.

Our [Wheeling] papers threatened that no such Convention should be permitted to
sit on Virginian soil. A Vigilance Committee was raised to put down any attempt
to hold a meeting; yet we met, in the most public manner. . . . Why was it? The
public sentiment was in favor of equal rights and free speech.

Thoburn’s final words in the letter provide historians with fodder for supposition
about what was soon to take place at the *Intelligencer*.

We are in hopes that we will have a free paper in this city before long. It would
certainly be well sustained, before long. The neighboring States [sic]. . . would
give it a living support. We have capitalists here who are willing to contribute
their means towards it. All we want is a good editor.

Twelve days later, without prior notice to readers, the October 9 edition of the
*Intelligencer* published Pendleton’s farewell and Campbell’s salutatory as the new editor
and owner of the newspaper. Joining Campbell in the venture was another acquaintance
of the Campbell and Pendleton families, John McDermot, who had been printing
Alexander Campbell’s *Millennial Harbinger* in Washington, Pennsylvania. Campbell
was destined to be the editorial voice of the paper while McDermot handled production. The public notice of the sale asked readers to close accounts outstanding with Pendleton’s business, Beatty & Co., within nine days.¹⁷

Campbell’s introductory paragraph in the salutatory called up an adage that could have been applicable to the two former Whigs’ recent divergence in political paths: “The least said is the soonest mended.”¹⁸ However, if there was a rift between the editors concerning politics it didn’t get in the way of business; Pendleton helped Campbell and McDermot finance the newspaper in the early years. Some historians have speculated that Pendleton kept hold of the purse strings so he also could maintain some influence over the newspaper’s content to prevent it from becoming a Republican publication.¹⁹

There was good reason for Pendleton to protect the collateral that secured his financial support, especially with the knowledge that Campbell was becoming active in the local Republican Party. In the same year, a circuit judge of the Wheeling District warned a jury that “all Republicans are to be looked on with suspicion . . . and they are obnoxious to the name and institutions of Virginia.”²⁰ A year earlier the circuit court of Harrison County, at nearby Clarksburg, had issued a “menacing edict” against reading the New York Tribune and a grand jury formally indicted its editor, Horace Greeley, charging that he “did knowingly, willfully, and feloniously circulate . . . a newspaper . . . with the intent . . . to incite negroes . . . to rebel and make insurrection.” The “club agent” for the paper fled the state to avoid indictment and possible imprisonment.²¹

Several years later an Intelligencer staff member, who worked for Campbell in the early years and later became the paper’s editor and a prominent state historian,
recalled that citizens of Wheeling threatened to dump the press in the river after hearing rumors that Campbell planned for the newspaper to be a Republican organ.22

But Campbell announced no editorial alignment with the Republican platform as he took over the editor’s seat. During his first year as editor he did acknowledge that the paper “had passed out of a Democratic regime” and had “commenced to break ground in favor of a free express of public opinion on all questions of State and national policy.” While the newspaper did not immediately become stridently Republican under the new editor, Campbell knew the newspaper’s “course rather unsettled the sensitive nerves of some of the ancient, or middle age school, who looked upon such a venture as entirely hazardous, altogether unwarrantable, pecuniarily [sic] impolitic.”23

Whether influenced by Pendleton’s monetary control, Campbell’s idealism, or his keen business savvy, during the first two years under new ownership, the tenor of the publication’s content held true to Campbell’s salutatory promise to “print an independent and liberal newspaper: one toward which all phases of public opinion can look for a fair representative of their views . . . candidly, impartially, without fear or affection toward any party whatsoever.”24

In the first week after the editorial transition, competitors took jabs at this liberal editorial policy. Campbell made it clear that he meant what he had said and also intended to be an advocate for Western Virginia and earn the support of his audience.

Some busy-bodies have taken much pain and trouble to circulate reports as to the political opinions of ourselves and those to be reflected in our paper, with an intention to do us an injury in this community. . . . We take the liberty of assuring the people of Wheeling that it is our intention to print an independent paper, reflecting the views and advocating the interest of Western Virginia, and pursue a course calculated to foster and build up the commercial and manufacturing interest of the city of Wheeling in particular. If any citizen of Wheeling has
objections to a paper in their midst of this kind we would like to know who they are. But we will say no more. . . . Our paper will speak for itself, and as we print a good or bad paper, do we expect to be liberally or indifferently supported in our business.\textsuperscript{25}

Campbell understood that partisan papers sought only part of a region’s readership, those who agreed with the party perspective. By adopting a nonpartisan stance, having no formal affiliation with a political party, Campbell’s \textit{Intelligencer} could seek a much more inclusive and larger readership.\textsuperscript{26} But nonpartisan did not mean objective; Campbell’s idealism demanded he present the journal in a way that spurred public discussion and his own opinions were voiced clearly in his editorials. Viewed within Daniel Hallin’s model of “objective” journalism, during the early years Campbell’s \textit{Intelligencer} operated primarily within the Sphere of Legitimate Controversy, addressing social issues that were open and acceptable to debate by all.\textsuperscript{27} Unlike the view of James Gordon Bennett’s \textit{New York Herald} that “when free discussion does not promote the public good, it has no more right to exist than a bad government,” Campbell believed that public discussion was a necessity.\textsuperscript{28}

One issue, in particular, he felt needed to be discussed openly was the detriment of slavery—a topic that was not considered within the Sphere of Legitimate Controversy, but rather in the Sphere of Deviance, being unworthy of or impossible to discuss civilly in the political environment of the 1850s. The condition of slaves did not trouble Campbell in the way it outraged abolitionists, but he hated the system of slave labor, believing “the question of permanency or extension of slavery in this country, is one of dollars and cents . . . [and] negro labor is a blight and a curse to our best interests.”\textsuperscript{29}
Campbell saw the institution as slowing Virginia’s economy and engulfing the potential progress of the South.

His opponents met Campbell’s protests against the system with charges that he was a “Yankee abolitionist” and should be ignored or ridden out of town on a rail. While he would gladly acknowledge that the Intelligencer was a paper in favor of free speech, free labor, and free soil, he would not admit to being an abolitionist, because he was not.

When we . . . endeavor to show . . . that the nigger is a curse to us here in this State, why there comes up in response a perfect torrent of abuse from every little brat of a Weekly, in the backwoods regions of Western Virginia. They cry “Abolition” . . . . You can’t get one of them to meet you on the merits of the question at all.30

Support for the Intelligencer’s style of nonpartisanship came slowly. According to Campbell’s own estimate, about 10 percent of the men in Wheeling—mostly professional and commercial men—subscribed to a daily newspaper, averaging a circulation of about seven hundred copies for each of the city’s three competing dailies. Campbell contended many more residents of Wheeling read the papers, even if “they have to go to the hotels and barber shops to do so,” and those who didn’t pay felt simply reading the paper was a form of patronage. Yet, these non-paying readers felt “as much at liberty to criticize and reprobate as if they paid three prices for the paper.” And those who were paid subscribers claimed a “peculiar prerogative to discontinue a paper whenever there appears any thing [sic] in its columns that does not tally with their views,” resulting in editors having to “write all their opinions in fear and trembling.”31

For the new editor, this gratis system and a long-held practice of selling advertising on credit were seen as barriers to a profitable endeavor.
“The debts of a newspaper are scattered all over the country in little dribs, which of course will not pay to go out and collect,” Campbell lamented. A veteran editor of the Charlestown Virginia Free Press claimed that if he had “all the lost balances resulting from a thirty-five years’ credit system, we might now be seated in dignified retirement upon one of the best farms in Virginia.” Acknowledging that the newspapers in the East had moved to a cash system of payment, in early 1857 Campbell became an advocate for an editor’s conference at which all papers from around the state of Virginia would “determine upon a system of payments, which will be rigidly lived up to by every paper.” The conference was eventually scheduled for October 28, 1857, in the capital city, Richmond. By that time the Intelligencer had already instituted a modern pay-by-week system and had let out its entire city circulation to a Wheeling news dealer.

The newspaper’s financial tribulations were exacerbated later that year when a national economic depression, caused by the Panic of 1857, engulfed the country. The effects lasted about a year, with the circulation dropping to fewer than three hundred copies each day and the paper struggling to remain solvent. The amount of advertising was scarce and publication of weekly and semi-weekly issues was halted for a time.

Besides the cost of continuing the business, Campbell and McDermot had debts on the purchase of the business. Campbell’s brother Gus wrote from Kansas, expressing concern about the Intelligencer’s outstanding debt.

I know very well that if you had your paper paid for you could do well where you are. I think too that you are engaged in a good [work]: that of lifting Western Va [sic] out of the misery pit of niggerism. . . . but a man must be honest before he is liberal, and when he has a Shylock as his creditor the pound of flesh leaves no room for philanthropy. The pound of flesh must be paid first.
Gus left no doubt about the creditor to whom he referred, continuing: “How are you & Jo[seph] Pendleton making matters these times? What do you think about your prospects for paying him? . . . I have no doubt that if you only had it paid for you could make money fast enough. But there is the great trouble.”

There is no record of the amount owed Pendleton in 1857, but an 1859 promissory note from Campbell and McDermot to Pendleton designated an amount of $2,000, half to be paid within one year and the other half within two years.

While Pendleton’s loans helped bring Campbell’s Intelligencer to life, that doesn’t discredit the possibility of support as mentioned in Thoburn’s communication to the Republican Party-builder, Underwood. Correspondence over the next few years indicated Campbell’s press sought and gained increasing financial support from Republicans.

In March 1856 both Campbell and John C. Underwood had corresponded with Seward, the leading Republican politician, requesting copies of his speeches. Campbell reminded the senator of their first meeting, a year earlier when Campbell and a college pal had visited Seward in Auburn, and made a point that he was “a citizen of the slave state of Va.” Underwood’s letter to Seward expressed his support for the senator, also reminding Seward that Underwood was a citizen of Virginia, where he considered it his “fortune to be called by my slave holding neighbors a Sewardite.” The roles of Seward, Campbell, and Underwood would intertwine in upcoming years in helping Republicanism to take root in Western Virginia.

In the 1856 letter to Seward, Underwood revealed he would attend the Republican National Convention, to be held in Philadelphia in June of that year. Underwood, a
northern abolitionist from central New York, was a graduate of Campbell’s alma mater, Hamilton College, where he took an interest in the political, social, and moral problems of the day. As a young man he spent two years in northwestern Virginia, near Clarksburg, as a tutor before returning to New York to become a prominent lawyer.

After marrying a daughter of the South, Underwood made his home in the heart of the Old Dominion near Mrs. Underwood’s family, about seventy-five miles outside the capital of Richmond. Underwood was convinced that more antislavery men moving into Virginia and operating farms with non-slave labor could sway the political power and convert the state’s position on slavery; he spent several years attempting to make that happen.45

At the 1856 Philadelphia Republican National Convention Underwood made a speech criticizing Virginia and slavery, after which he received a telegram from his wife saying it was unsafe for him to return home due to his neighbors’ violent reactions to his speech.46 He exploited this perceived banishment from Virginia, bombarding New York newspapers with letters about exile from the state and campaigning as a popular speaker for the Republican Party. Meanwhile, he took advantage of the sectional conflict within Virginia to instigate the formation of a Republican Party in the panhandle, acting as liaison between local followers and the party’s national committee.47

Campbell’s and Underwood’s political paths crossed directly as a result of the Republican State Convention held in Wheeling in September 1856, the event Pendleton had adamantly warned against. Although Underwood wasn’t able to attend in person, a letter he had written was read at the gathering and he was selected as a Republican presidential elector from the state of Virginia. This event led to the correspondence from
Thoburn, who chaired the meeting, revealing the search for a good editor to establish a free newspaper in Wheeling.48

Within a few months of the state convention, information from and about Underwood began to appear in the Intelligencer. He sometimes sent correspondence for publication and his name also appeared in regard to his association with a venture called the American Emigrant Aid and Homestead Company, which had been capitalized by a dozen prominent New York capitalists, most of whom were Republicans. The company was organized in May 1857 with Underwood as secretary.49

The idea behind the enterprise was to purchase land in Western Virginia at low slave-state prices and attract farmers and laborers from the North or from Europe to move there and form communities. The purpose was to bring in newcomers that were opposed to slavery so their antislavery sentiments and the newspapers they would establish, with the help of the company, would influence natives with latent antislavery sentiments. The prosperity of the subsidized communities, built and run by hard-working immigrants, were to be examples to show native Virginians the advantages of free labor. These new Virginians were expected to vote Republican.

By January 1858 Underwood reported to Seward that he had been in several of the western counties “in the business of our Co & am delighted with the great & glorious change which is every where [sic] manifest.” He asked Seward to send his autograph “in the form of a franked speech or document” to several of the immigrants.50 Underwood confided to Campbell, a year later, that “Gov. Seward some time ago wrote me that he regarded our emigration . . . one of the most beneficent [sic] enterprises of the age.”51
Campbell also had continued to correspond with Seward, proclaiming his support in a letter to the senator in March 1958, while implying the *Intelligencer* could be more effective if its circulation were increased.

“Wishing to see your speech intensively circulated and read in this community, beyond the limits of a circulation of our paper.” Campbell requested nearly seven hundred copies of the Seward speech to be forwarded to a long list of individuals and publications. While Campbell’s paper continued to publish multiple views on issues, by late in 1858 Campbell had begun to use the pages of the *Intelligencer* to declare itself an “opposition paper,” a form of public allegiance to the Republican Party.

In November 1858 Underwood wrote to Seward to inform him of “the progress of the cause in Va.,” indicating that the undertaking had produced results in establishing a Republican press in Northwestern Virginia.

Under the impulse of our Emigration Movement we have built up one Daily & triweekly Republican paper *The Wheeling Intelligencer* [due] to the liberality of yourself & some other N.Y. friends. The *Ceredo Kenova*, the *Wellsburg Herald* & *Brooke Co. Farmer* all good sound Republican Weeklys [sic] & we have half converted all the other papers.

Underwood’s statement implied Seward and his friends had contributed money to help support the *Intelligencer*, perhaps as investors in the emigrant aid undertaking if not directly to the newspaper. However, Underwood singles out Seward’s support for the *Intelligencer*, not including the other newspapers in the statement regarding the generosity of Seward and his New York friends. The Ceredo and Wellsburg papers were likely connected to Underwood’s company and, since Ceredo was one of the communities created and subsidized by the American Emigrant Aid Company, undoubtedly the *Ceredo Kenova* received support from that source. If all publications
mentioned were being supported similarly through investment in Underwood’s company, would he not have included them in one list, without calling out the *Intelligencer*?

News of this advancement of a Republican press in Western Virginia made its way to Abraham Lincoln in December 1858 by way of Senator Lyman Trumbull, of Illinois. Underwood sent a letter to Trumbull suggesting press publicity that would be beneficial in electing Lincoln to Congress and offering to help “in securing books or funds” for the purpose of Lincoln’s success. Underwood assured Trumbull that “as one of the outgrowths of our Homestead Company’s operations, we have seen a daily & triweekly paper (*The Wheeling Intelligencer*) & the following weeklies, the *Ceredo Crescent*, the *Wheeling Intelligencer*, the *Wellsburg Herald & Brooke Co Farmer*, advocating Republican principles in Western Va.” Trumbull enclosed Underwood’s letter into his correspondence with Lincoln, to which Lincoln responded he had “not the slightest thought of being a candidate for Congress in this District.” Lincoln and others would soon hear much more about the *Intelligencer*, a Republican newspaper in a Southern state.

In early 1859 the Republican Party began to search for a location at which to hold the party’s national convention in 1860, a presidential election year. With the behind-the-scenes support of Underwood, Wheeling was being considered to host the event. The symbolic significance of holding an antislavery party convention in a Southern slave state was not lost on the national committee. Although the northern panhandle was located above Mason’s and Dixon’s line, it was a section of the Old Dominion and therefore considered part of the South. Underwood saw Campbell and his *Intelligencer* as ways to
incite support for the plan and, in turn, saw the plan benefitting the press for which he continued to seek support.

“Had a pleasant interview with Gov. Morgan on the subject of our application for the location of the Nat[ional] Con[vention] at Wheeling,” Underwood wrote to Campbell in March, 1859. “We shall likely succeed if we work for it.” 57

To assure the deciding committee was well aware of the Republican sentiment in northwestern Virginia, Underwood included a list of the national committee members and told Campbell to “send them any good thing that shall appear in your paper.” He went on to explain that there were others invited to the committee and that the Virginia Republican Committee, at Wheeling, should make an appointment from the state. “I take the liberty of recommending to them the Editor of the Intelligencer for that position,” he wrote.58

The Intelligencer announced plans for the national convention to be held in Wheeling to its readers in May 1859.

“There remains scarcely a reasonable doubt—at least none we are apprised of—but that the next National Republican Convention will be held in Wheeling.”59

In July, Campbell reiterated that “scarcely any doubt” remained of the event being held in Wheeling. Quoting an article from the Brooklyn Transcript, Campbell said a majority of the executive committee members had indicated Wheeling as their first choice.60

The Parkersburg News blamed the Intelligencer for inciting a “radical change of public opinion . . . which we do not like.” Citing the “insinuating, pretendedly [sic] moderate but ever advancing dissemination of Freesoil doctrines” by the Intelligencer,
the News claimed the Intelligencer had “brought about this evil that would allow a portion of the Commonwealth to host a meeting of such an organization.” 61

While Underwood was pleased with the rising profile of the Intelligencer and its editor, he continued to search for ways to raise financial support for the newspaper. In July 1859 he wrote to Campbell.

I wish you to become candidate for House Printers & if you will issue a circular & direct a copy to each of the Rep Members (getting attached as many names of your friends as you think best) I will meet you in Washington & if we don’t get the office of Printer we will be likely to secure you some other good situation. 62

The good situation Underwood sought for Campbell and his newspaper did not materialize and the plans to host the Republican National Convention in Wheeling were thwarted by the advent of John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, in the fall of 1859.

In February 1860 Underwood reported to Campbell that he had been in Washington for ten days hoping to find some position to support the newspaper. Although Campbell had been nominated for patronage positions, those in power felt it was their duty to award such positions in states that would be carried by Republican votes in the upcoming election so they could assure their presidential candidate would be elected. 63 Despite the growing strength of Republicanism in the western section of the state, Virginia did not meet that specification.

Campbell wrote to Seward seeking monetary support for the Intelligencer in June 1860. The first installment of one thousand dollars against the 1859 note to Pendleton had not yet been paid and was due in just four months.

You will recollect my being at Washington in March last & while there communicated to you our needs in the way of money for our paper: and also that
you gave me two letters, one to Gov. Morgan, one to Jno. A.C. Gray, stating, however that you did not think it worth my while to make an effort to raise money until after the nominations were made. This I found to be the case on going to New York. . . . The purpose of this letter is to bring the matter before you again & see what I can do by going East now.64

Campbell continued that he felt “some delicacy under the circumstances,” as Seward had not been nominated to be the presidential candidate on the Republican ticket in the party’s national convention held a month earlier in Chicago. Campbell, an elector from Virginia, had gone into the convention supporting Seward, but changed his support to Abraham Lincoln during the event. Campbell admitted he thought he would be able to request Seward’s friends to support the newspaper to aid in the senator’s presidential campaign, “but since that is not the case, I feel some hesitancy as to what is proper for me to do.”

As I told you we still owe upwards of 2000 on our paper, a thousand of which will be due in a short time. Our great desire is to get the indebtedness out of the road this campaign, if we can, and if we cannot get it all, to get as much as possible. Do you think your friends in NY . . . would be willing, on your instance, to do anything for us?65

Seward responded that the references he had provided to Campbell earlier were as good as when they were given.66

Campbell continued to scramble for money to pay the debt on the Intelligencer until late 1860, but by 1859 the newspaper was on the verge of breaking out to a broader audience than Wheeling and the surrounding region. Campbell had spent the first three years of ownership refining his editorial skills and pushing to improve the newspaper. Then, in November 1859 the Intelligencer came out in a “new dress,” with a considerably altered and improved look. Campbell said such an occasion was one when “even the most dignified sheet can speak fully, freely, and even floridly, of its past, present and future.”67
We have been, for some time, gauging the limit to which newspaper enterprise in a city and community like ours, could be carried, and more than once we have thought we were pretty well up to the point beyond which enterprise and a disposition to press on could hardly be made to pay its way. There is limit to newspaper enterprise in every community, a limit that cannot be very well passed, strain as much as you will. We intend to shove this limit as far as ever we can, and if it will stand the shoving, we intend to keep shoving.68

The shoving, so far, had resulted in people outside of the community of Wheeling taking notice of the Intelligencer’s bold approach to free speech and its increasing influence in the region. The Pittsburgh Gazette said the Intelligencer was an “excellent and sprightly sheet, and has the noble independence to speak out freely its sentiments” and the Pennsylvania Telegraph didn’t know “which more to admire, the ability or the manly candor and impartiality which has [sic] characterized the Intelligencer in all its discussion. Such papers always flourish. It is a law of nature that they should.”69

The Boston Bee recognized the Intelligencer and the Missouri Democrat for having “borne the brunt of the Free-labor movement in the Southern States, and the ability and consistency with which they have fought their way has gained them an enviable reputation throughout the country.”70

Francis H. Peirpoint, a politician from Fairmont, Virginia, had noted the Intelligencer’s openness, too.71 He wrote a confidential letter to the editors acknowledging that “the whole portion of the district is destitute of opposition papers.” 72 He saw an opportunity to support his preferred candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, William Goggin and Waitman T. Willey, in the election of 1860, while also supporting the newspaper’s growth. Peirpoint proposed the editors create a tri-weekly campaign paper to help support his chosen candidates.
It will give you a large circulation, and there need not be much politics in it. It would introduce your papers to hand through this district, who would after the canvass is over with continue it or the weekly. And then you could pursue the even tenor of your way as heretofore and just as certainly as a man reads no other paper than the W. Int. he thinks as you think.\textsuperscript{73}

Suggesting the campaign publication be created inexpensively “so as to leave room for a living business,” he laid out the strategy to be followed. “Of course you would not support Goggin Willey because you love them better but because you hated Letcher worse.”

Campbell did not personally support either Goggin or his opponent, John Letcher, and there is no evidence that he published the campaign sheet. However, the exchange introduced two men who were destined to make history together in 1861. Peirpoint’s sentiments in his introductory letter continued to be relevant when he and Campbell worked together to make West Virginia a state.

I think I understand your position in politics. I also understand my own position. . . I intend to discuss politics my own way. The great idea that I desire to impress on the public mind is that there are other interests in Virginia than the negro interest. This I design doing in all the lawful ways that I can. . . . If ever there is a reform in Virginia it must commence in this district, and if free principles can be so inaugurated in to \textit{sic} the district, this it must go.\textsuperscript{74}

On the threshold of the 1860 presidential election Campbell and the \textit{Intelligencer} also stepped onto the national stage. In the autumn of 1859 Campbell was a leader in the Virginia State Republican Committee and the party’s upcoming national convention was tentatively scheduled to be held in Wheeling. Then, on October 18, 1859, the \textit{Intelligencer} reported a serious riot had taken place a day earlier at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, although Campbell had little to say about the incident that day or the next: “Admist a great deal that is
interesting and exciting, we have scarcely anything that is satisfactory and
conclusive as to what was the origin, aim and end of the whole movement.”75

Instead, he included a running column of multiple telegraphic
dispatches—often contradictory and exaggerated—from Washington and
Maryland sources providing details as reports trickled in.

An armed band of Abolitionists have full possessions of the U.S. Arsenal at
Harper’s Ferry. . . . There are about 500 to 700 whites and blacks. . . . All the
streets are in possession of the mob, every road and lane leading thereto
barricaded. . . . Citizens were arrested and pressed into service, including many
negroes. . . . Town in possession of negroes who arrest every one they can catch
and imprison them. . . . The mob has planted cannon at the bridge, and all the
trains had been stopped.76

Campbell refused to jump to conclusions, as other publications did with
their “theories to advance in connection with the news.” He said, “No two
opinions agree. All seemed to be excited . . . when they write, and to have written
helter skelter.”77

Campbell concluded that “time and its attending patient military and civil
investigations, are what are wanted, and until these are had and published, all
speculation is but idle.”78

Nonetheless, Campbell felt he had enough information to publish lessons
to be learned from the incident. His piece focused on the North’s need to
understand the adverse results of fanatic abolitionists and the South needed to
realize the threat of insurrection of a greater magnitude was a “possible
contingency in a country in whose midst there exists a large and degraded class of
humanity.”79 It was the first of a series of editorials Campbell wrote about John
Brown’s raid at Harper’s Ferry.
As the frenzy around the event grew, Campbell pointed out how the relatively minor incident antagonized the deepening rift between the North and South and was “bursting with the wild alarum [sic] of war.”

People heard the first news and straightway they went into a sort of a panic. When once under a quasi panical influence, they were ready for anything. Without judgement, without decency in many instances, they fell to criminating and denouncing, saying lo here! And lo there is the cause. Some men, perchance, picked up a paper . . . which had “irrepressible conflict” printed in double sized double leaded letters. To see that was enough. All the furies of imagination like Pandora just opened, were loosed at once through the brain, and away flew fright, passion, and prejudice, knocking the sceptered reason clear off her fabled throne and trampling her sacredness in the dust of all the low instincts.

Campbell’s cool-headed and thoughtful observations gained attention beyond the newspaper’s circulation area. Multiple newspapers turned to the Intelligencer’s words as representative of a reasonable southern voice, reprinting in their own newspapers clips of and commentary about Campbell’s editorials. Campbell included an example from the New York Evening Post in his newspaper on October 28.

Amid the mad vociferations of the southern papers, while some . . . cry out for the instant extinction of Brown, and others talk absurdly of demanding the surrender of his presumed accomplices from the executives of the northern state—there is one Virginia editor, at least, who is disposed to keep hold of his wits in the flurry, and to inquire whether late incidents may not have more than one import. . . . The duty of sane men is, not to inflame the prejudices of localities, but to inquire as to what is to be done. . . . These are the views of the Virginia print, and they certainly deserve the attention of the people of the state.

On October 29 the Chicago Press & Tribune recognized the Intelligencer as the leading journal of Western Virginia, reprinting Campbell’s “judicious and striking remarks” from his editorial of October 21, “Lessons of the Harper’s Ferry Riot.” On November 1, the New York Evening Post featured the same article.
In a “private and confidential” letter, Joseph Medill, editor of the *Press & Tribune*, wrote to Campbell that the “bold and noble stand your paper has taken on the Harper’s Ferry event challenges our admiration.”

Medill added, “The position your paper has taken in behalf of free labor will build up for you a national reputation, and we have not doubt, but in the end you will meet with a liberal pecuniary response from the friends of the cause you espouse.”

Medill went on to include the *Intelligencer* solidly in the Republican family with the *Press & Tribune* and suggested Western Virginia “should be separated from the negro breeding East and erected into a free state. . . . A triumph of our party next year, would give the course of free soil a powerful propulsion in your state.”

The Harper’s Ferry incident ended Wheeling’s hopes of hosting the Republican National Convention, but the *Intelligencer’s* response to John Brown’s raid was a milestone in the publication’s enterprise. Campbell’s priorities as editor—quality over quantity of news, a concerted effort to include local and regional news, and minimal importance placed on political affiliation—had helped to build a respected publication. A broad recognition of Campbell’s free speech position and his talent helped to make it a profitable undertaking.

Within a year of the Harper’s Ferry event Campbell’s efforts to pay off the debt owed to Pendleton were rewarded. The loan was paid in full nearly a year early. On November 12, 1860, Campbell and McDermot assumed complete control of the newspaper.
“Redeemed—disenthralled—Set free!” Campbell exclaimed in reaction to the cleared debt, in a message written in his scrapbook alongside a copy of the promissory note.87

Even though Pendleton hated the “Black Republicans,” his financing set the stage for Campbell to introduce and nurture Republicanism in the panhandle of Western Virginia. Campbell was able to take advantage of a “good old boys” network to move into an editor’s position and then to purchase the newspaper. He continued to network personally, professionally, and politically in order to make the newspaper his own, both in attitude and in ownership. Although the newspaper did not espouse Republican principles in the first few years under Campbell’s editorship, he personally became a party zealot, a devotion that was his membership card to political support that would help him advance his paper.

But it was Campbell’s determination and integrity that set the publication apart from others in the region. The Pittsburgh Dispatch noted in 1859 that the Intelligencer’s direct competitor, the Wheeling Times, suggested the people of Western Virginia should “snuff out the Intelligencer, not by violence but starvation.” The Dispatch observed that since a number of newspapers in the region had “flickered and died for want of patronage, we should infer that the people have been practicing on the advice of the Times.”

“Yet the Intelligencer flourishes, ‘incendiary’ though it be, and so long as its enterprising publishers keep it up to its present point of vitality and enterprise, it will live—an honor to Wheeling, and to the Western part of that state.”88
Notes


2. Donovan Hiner Bond, “The Wheeling Intelligencer and Its Editors, 1852-1861” (thesis, West Virginia University, 1948). Bond identified three distinct channels of Campbell’s policy between 1856 and 1859, particularly stressing quality. Although the Intelligencer was one of the first journals in the region to subscribe to the Associated Press services, Campbell disliked many of the features, including that the organization put more emphasis on quantity of news than on authority, saying in the September 9, 1859, issue of the Intelligencer that the news service was “like the jackass who ate himself—anything to fill up.”


11. “Mr. Seward,” Wheeling Daily Intelligencer, September 5, 1856, CA.


18. Pendleton, “To Our Friends and Readers.”


24 Campbell, “Saluatory.”


32. Ibid.
39. “Gus Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” December 19, 1858, AWC.
40 Ibid.
41. “Promissory Note to J.H. Pendleton,” October 4, 1859, AWC.
42. “A.W. Campbell to William H. Seward,” March 22, 1856, The Papers of William Henry Seward, Rare Books Special Collections & Preservation Department, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY.
44. Ibid.
48. “Republican Convention.”
51. “John C. Underwood to A.W. Campbell,” January 21, 1859, AWC.
56. “Lyman Trumbull to Abraham Lincoln,” December 7, 1858, ALP.
58 Ibid.
62. “John C. Underwood to A.W. Campbell,” July 13, 1859, AWC.
63. “John C. Underwood to A.W. Campbell,” February 14, 1860, AWC.
65. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Francis H. Pierpont, “Francis H. Peirpoint Biographical Narrative” (Morgantown, WV, n.d.), Pierpont, Francis Harrison (1814-1899). Papers 1811-1949, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries. Peirpoint changed the spelling of his name to Pierpont around 1880, claiming the family name had been altered on land patents in earlier generations. To maintain the authenticity to actual events, in this study the author has used the spelling as the gentlemen, himself, used it on documents, with the spelling change reflected in references to documents created after 1880. The later spelling—Pierpont—is often used in historical references and collections bearing his name—such as the papers cited in this note—and publications after 1880 will often use the revised spelling. As a result, both spellings will appear in this study based on the actual spelling used in the document being referenced. Read more about the name change at http://www.francishpeirpoint.com/
72. “F.H. Peirpoint to Editors Wheeling Intelligencer,” March 15, 1859, AWC.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
84. “Archibald Campbell Scrapbook.” “Lesson of the Harper’s Ferry Riot,” an article clipped from the New York Evening Post, was kept in Campbell’s scrapbook noted as A.W. Campbell’s article, with the publication date, November 1, 1859.
85. “J. Medill to A.W. Campbell,” October 30, 1859, AWC.
86. Ibid.
87. “Paid Promissory Note for Intelligencer,” November 12, 1860, AWC.
Chapter 3: 1859-1860—Personal Growth

Individuality, and hence, individual responsibility, is the grand feature which distinguishes man from every other animal.
—Wheeling Daily Intelligencer

Archie Campbell used his personal networks to firmly and successfully establish himself in the editor’s seat of the Wheeling Intelligencer. The position was a good fit for Campbell, an “industrious student” who possessed the power to retain what he read and “appeared to have stored away in his memory a fund of information that was illimitable, and like a great spool, unraveled at his will.”¹

Campbell read broadly, accepted every available opportunity to travel, often stood before groups as a speaker, and took pleasure in gaining and sharing knowledge through these activities. He viewed opportunity to communicate effectively as a key to a progressive society. While he, personally, boldly shared news and commentary about issues of the day in the newspaper, he continued to depend on his networks to supplement his efforts. The Intelligencer published articles on a breadth of current topics, many of which Campbell encouraged contributors, including friends and family, to write.

Campbell also valued the spoken word, believing “every avenue . . . which can be thrown open for the public culture is of incalculable benefit,” and should be made broadly available.² He actively promoted the Wheeling lecture series and encouraged lyceums in the city, which further expanded his network.

Brother Gus saw Campbell’s efforts as a way to help expand people’s thinking to encompass the larger society. In a letter in late 1858 Gus attributed Wheeling’s blossoming lecture system to those efforts.
I see you have been trying to ingratiate [sic] the system of lecture for the winter season. . . . I think that the move may be wholly ascribed to you, for I don’t think the Wheelingites would ever have thought of lecture. The idea originated among a freer people than Va can get boast of . . . where all classes join in the spirit of intellective culture.3

Popular lecturing in the midnineteenth century was a national phenomenon. At lectures, middle-class audiences cultivated tastes for self-improvement and entertainment. Attendance at these events held the promise of a shared experience and was a form of literary consumption in which people from diverse villages, towns, and cities could hear, read, and argue about the same things. At its peak, this “lyceum movement” drew up to a million people each week nationwide to attend talks on an extensive range of topics in local venues. In this way lectures helped to define and secure a national culture.4 The lecturers were “intellectual leaders of an intelligent progress in the country . . . in the best sense, Americans . . . without exception, of the largest and wisest liberality of thought and culture.”5

Wheeling lectures reported in the *Intelligencer* in 1858 included an Ojibwa chief, Pah-tah-se-ga, speaking on the manners and customs of Indian life; Professor A. N. Johnson and his company of vocalists providing a series of musical lectures and entertainments; George D. Prentice, editor of the Louisville *Journal*, presenting the “Present Aspects and Policies of American Politics”; the Reverend Dr. Ferguson, of the University of Edinburgh, lecturing on Robert Burns; and Professor Fowler, whose series of lectures included the topics of matrimony, self-improvement, and phrenology.6

Prentice appeared in Wheeling frequently as a lecturer. He was known for witty, satirical editorials and lectures, and Campbell claimed that no man, except James Gordon Bennett, was more widely known in the newspaper world. Campbell claimed Prentice
had “written more funny, sharp, pungent, crisp . . . things than any other man on or off the American press.”

By December 1858, the interest in and attendance at lectures was increasing. “The intellectual tastes of our citizens are being excited, and we may add, gratified,” Campbell printed in the *Intelligencer*. “We are glad to see this, because it speaks well for the intelligence as a city, and because we believe much good will result.”

In congratulating Campbell on the success of his undertaking, Gus observed the accomplishment as a step toward Campbell’s good work of freeing Western Virginia “from the demoralizing influence of . . . familyism.”

Its benefits are only applicable where the laberer [*sic*] & the artisan have a living intellectual identity and are not looked upon in the light of niggers and mules. When the people of Western Va come to fully appreciate such a sphere you may say that the scales have dropped from their eyes—the shackles have fallen from their limbs—the sickly air of familyism will be exchanged for the invigorating breezes that blow from intellectual heights.

A publication of the period, *The United States Democratic Review*, stated that admirable eloquence should include strength and clearness, dignity and elevation, ease and gracefulness, and “power to fix the attention, to convince the understanding, to kindle the imagination, and to touch and subdue the heart.” When Campbell described the nature of a good lecturer—not to be confused with someone giving an oration, sermon, or dissertation, he said—those attributes had to be accompanied by a speaker never attempting “to be all mountain, but . . . content to descend into the valleys sometimes, as into long retreats of quiet thought, but when he does come up into the sun . . . it is grand.”
Forms of oratory were areas with which Campbell was familiar. He had grown up listening to his Uncle Alexander Campbell, who was lauded for his preaching, oration, and lectures on education. “No one can hear Mr. [Alexander] Campbell preach, without being struck with the impression that he is no ordinary man,” the New York Day Book printed, as attributed in the Intelligencer. “Venerable in age, and tall and commanding, in appearance, he looks like one who speaks with authority.”

During Archie Campbell’s formative years orators were national heroes and eloquence was admired and diligently cultivated as a necessity to success in public life. He was well-practiced in the art of oration, having eagerly participated in literary and debating societies in college, which was one of the most important things a young man could do to hone his oration skills, according to Senator George Hoar, of Massachusetts, in an article published in Scribner’s Magazine.

Campbell supported offering similar opportunities to others, including those who could not attend college, as he had. He encouraged the formation of non-exclusive local lyceums, where questions of the day would be discussed.

There is nothing that befits a young man for facing the world, in any of its phases, than this same system of practical debating. It wears off the natural diffidence and gives the readiness and confidence, which properly exercised, are always the great auxiliaries of success in business. . . . These lyceums have been the nurseries of some of the most efficient men of our country.

He believed that encouraging lyceums was “the most valuable safe guards, next to the Common Schools, which we can rear around our social or political fabric.”

Many youths, for the want of encouragement or opportunity to attend them, and for want of the facilities which they afford towards the developing of an intellectual taste . . . have formed grogshop habits, which have broken them down through life, and consigned them to disgraceful graves. . . . It ought to be the desire of our city Lyceums to make their influence for good as comprehensive as
possible. . . . It diminishes taxes for the support of paupers and criminals, and it gives society that still greater consideration, good citizens.\textsuperscript{18}

A “perfect and consummate orator,” according to Hoar, was an amalgam of natural attributes and learned skills. Hoar said an orator must “possess the highest faculty given to man. . . . be a great artist . . . . be a great actor. . . . be a master of great things that interest mankind. . . have knowledge, wit, wisdom, fancy, imagination, courage, nobleness, sincerity, grace, a heart of fire.”\textsuperscript{19}

Campbell fit the description well and as the decade turned over into the 1860s, Campbell’s mettle was proven to include Hoar’s further requisites. “The great orator must be a man of absolute sincerity. Never advocate a cause in which you do not believe, or affect an emotion you do not feel. No skill . . . will cover up the want of earnestness.”\textsuperscript{20}

One cause in which Campbell believed was women’s rights. He viewed expanded rights for women as directly aligned with plans for an expanding America. Like his Uncle Alexander, Campbell believed members of society owed to themselves, to their children, to their country, and to the world the support of female education as a way to improve society. In 1848, the year the first women’s convention was held at Seneca Falls, New York, Alexander Campbell laid out the extent of his vision for female education at a lecture given at the Wheeling Lyceum.

It is not the education of the daughters of the affluent and honorable only, or chiefly, of which we speak—it is the education of all—it is common, it is universal female education, and to a more liberal extent than has been yet imagined—for which we speak, when we plead for that female education indispensable to the full and proper amelioration of the social state.\textsuperscript{21}
By 1859 the “women’s question” went well beyond equal education, to include issues of women’s suffrage, women’s property rights, equal custody rights, a wife’s contractual right to keep her wages, and a year later, women’s right to divorce. Open discussion of these issues demonstrated that women constituted a portion of “the people” capable of shaping public opinion and stimulating political action.22

“Women’s rights are as women’s abilities and wishes—nothing more, nothing less,” Campbell printed, although he acknowledged that he didn’t believe women would be able to vote until sometime in the far future.23

On May 16, 1859, the Intelligencer included selected notes from speeches at the Women’s Rights Anniversary Convention held in New York. Campbell described the speakers as “naturally much more than ordinarily talented, and some of them very highly educated, and . . . of course often intellectually interesting.”24 One speaker expressed Campbell’s perspective.

If a woman can write a novel, God meant her to write novels. If she can act, play, preach, God meant her to act, play, or preach. . . .This woman question is universally wide. Give woman the rights that belong to her, and you double at once the power of your thirty States. The question . . . involves progress, literature, art, religion.25

Putting his words into action, Campbell sought contributions to the Intelligencer from women who could write. Campbell’s sister, Jane, often contributed articles at her brother’s insistence.

“This leader that appeared in the Daily Intelligencer on the 24 of January 1859 was written for me by Sister Jane—at my instance some days before,” Campbell wrote in his scrapbook next to a clipping of the article.26
A year later, when Campbell asked Jane to write additional editorials on a regular basis, she was hesitant.

“What can I write an editorial about every other day? What must be my topics? Books, literature of any kind?” However, she did agree to write additional articles, even if not as frequently as he had hoped. “I would do a great deal to gratify or assist you, but in regard to your request, I will not promise anything. I can only say that I will try to do something of what . . . you ask of me.”

Family friend Rebecca Harding also contributed to the *Intelligencer* and occasionally served as an editor for the publication. About the same age as Campbell, Harding was born in his hometown of Washington, Pennsylvania, and after moving to Wheeling as a child returned to Washington to attend school as a teen. Harding’s mother had been a student of Alexander Campbell and Rebecca became friends with Jane Campbell, Archie’s sister. A prolific reader and valedictorian of her class, Harding honed her writing skills and learned to observe the world with a keen eye when Campbell made her a member of the *Intelligencer’s* editorial staff. Rumors linked Campbell and Harding romantically, as well. A letter written by Harding after the two attended a public event together from which Harding departed suddenly, gave weight to the gossip.

I left you so abruptly, not from any unkind feelings towards yourself—they were never farther from my heart than on that day—but because I have been made painfully conscious before you entered that every one [sic] present regarded you in a [father] position, which I know to be distasteful to yourself. . . . You were unjust in saying that I “was ashamed to be seen at the front room with you”. . . . You spoke truthfully to me the other evening. Since then I have had the most perfect confidence in you—*more than you have in yourself*. May I ask you to do the same? . . . And if I have ever met you with an unreasonable coolness . . . will you believe that it is prompted only by a simple sense of justice and delicacy due to your position and mine? . . . At least never accuse me of “whims of caprice”, if
If there were romantic ties between Harding and Campbell, they were short-lived. By March 1860, Campbell was corresponding with and calling upon Annie Woods Crawford, the daughter of a fellow Republican Party leader. Campbell and Annie’s father, Richard Crawford, were both delegates to the party convention of 1860, held in Chicago. Crawford was a vice president and Campbell a secretary for the proceedings.

Sister Jane saw love blossoming with Annie and wrote to Campbell: “Do you remember what I told you I thought about Miss Annie & yourself when I was in Wheeling? I think now it was true, as I did then.”

At the same time, Harding had aspirations beyond the Intelligencer or the duties of matrimony. Her first short story, “Life in the Iron Mills,” was published in The Atlantic Monthly, one of the most prominent journals of the age, as the lead article in April 1861. The story, based on Harding’s observation of Wheeling’s milieu, was a fictional depiction of the gritty inner workings of the iron mills and the immigrants who worked there. Harding earned fifty dollars for the story, with an offer of twice that amount for her next piece . . . sight unseen. Harding continued to write over the next five decades, under the name Rebecca Harding Davis after her marriage to Clarke Davis and the birth of their son, Richard Harding Davis, who became a journalist and one of the most popular novelists of his time. Her works have been credited as establishing a new American literary form and setting the standard of social realism. A dozen novels and hundreds of stories and essays by her were published and she periodically returned to
journalism as a correspondent to the New York Tribune and the New York Independent.  

Many of Harding’s works reflected her experiences of living in Wheeling in the period leading up to and during the Civil War and provided interesting perspective on the inhabitants and the conflicts dividing the nation. Harding’s narrator in “Life in the Iron Mills” extended an invitation directly to the reader.

This is what I want you to do. I want you to . . . come right down with me, here, into the thickest of the fog and mud and foul effluvia. I want you to hear this story. . . . I want to make it a real thing to you. . . . This terrible question which men here have gone mad and died trying to answer.  

Campbell could have extended a similar invitation to readers of the Intelligencer as tolerance for political compromise dwindled to naught and visions for the future became cloaked in “the thickest of the fog” with the election of 1860. He, too, wanted readers to hear the story of a “terrible question”—the question of secession—in a way that would make things real to them.

If news of the 1859 raid on Harper’s Ferry had been “bursting with the wild alarum [sic] of war,” the election of 1860 provided the detonation. The incident at Harper’s Ferry had negated any hopes of the Republican National Convention being held in Virginia, but the state convention was scheduled to meet in Wheeling on the second day of May 1860.

Campbell did his part to promote the event and encouraged fellow newspapermen of like sentiment to do the same. “I think the suggestion about keeping a notion of the Wheeling convention before the people a good one; and something of the kind will be inserted next week,” replied J. E. Jacob, editor of the neighboring Wellsburg Herald, to a
note from Campbell in March. “What is wanted up here is something that will concentrate and organize the feeling and the fire-eaters among us are rapidly doing that by their rabid denunciation of Black Republicanism—perhaps more effectively than can be done by every other means.”

Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, agreed to run information, again, about the convention. “Your note surprised me, in view of the fact that I some time since printed and commended the call of your convention. But I will call attention . . . and this time be sure that my paragraph finds a place in the weekly.”

On opening day, the convention drew about 1,500 attendees. The Democratic Wheeling Union published a warning to the people of Wheeling that the “Black Republicans propose to offer a gross indignity. . . . They intend, if not prevented, holding one of their traitorous assemblages.” The Intelligencer reprinted the Union’s announcement, claiming it had been a call for mob violence against those who assembled.

However, the meeting opened without incident. The Cincinnati Commercial reported that the occasion might have seemed like an insignificant affair to those in free states far away, but “to old Virginians . . . it seemed as if today’s proceedings were the commencement of a new epoch, which was to result in the release from the thralldom under which, in Eastern and Western Virginia, they have been so long laboring.”

After the opening ceremonies of the meeting, Campbell was selected as one of three secretaries. Later in the day he was appointed to a committee that would prepare and present a report on the principles of the party in the State of Virginia and then he garnered another appointment as a member of the state executive committee. When
delegates to the Chicago National Convention were announced, Campbell was on that list, as well. Joining him as a delegate were his friend John C. Underwood and Annie Crawford’s father, Richard.43

Later in the day Campbell presented the report from the Committee on Address and Resolutions, which the Cincinnati Commercial said set forth “the aggressions of Eastern and slaveholding Virginia on the Western and free labor portions, and the grossly unequal burdens of taxation, by which the free laborer must support the slave breeder to a very large extent.”44 Afterward a motion was made to print ten thousand copies to circulate within the state.45

Two weeks later Campbell traveled with the Virginia delegation to the National Republican Convention, held in the Wigwam building near the Chicago River. Campbell was selected as a secretary for the meeting and Crawford was made a vice president.46

Campbell also acted as a correspondent for the Intelligencer, sending dispatches about the trip and the city of Chicago, but little about the convention proceedings. He did share that the Virginia delegates had taken an informal ballot among themselves to see where everyone stood on candidates for the nomination. “The result was that Seward was found to have more friends than all the others,” Campbell reported. The group met in conference with the Illinois delegation, then the Maryland and New York delegations, each of which pitched its chosen candidate as the best. After all of the salesmanship, Campbell wrote, “I apprehend we are still mixed, and it is hard to tell for whom the delegation will vote. I think that the friends of Seward and Bates, if they find the nomination of either impossible or impolitic, will go strong for Lincoln.”47
Campbell’s prognostication was correct. Campbell, himself, had entered the convention favoring William H. Seward, a New York senator, for the nomination, but like his fellow Virginia delegates, he shifted his support to Abraham Lincoln of Illinois during the proceedings. The Intelligencer broke the news of the nomination expecting it would “take our readers as much by surprise as it did us. We certainly had not the most remote idea that Mr. Lincoln would be chosen over so many prominent candidates before the Convention.”

Campbell’s concerted support for Lincoln began in earnest after he returned home to the newspaper. The Intelligencer began running multiple items nearly every day about Lincoln, sometimes dedicating two or three columns of the front page, which was normally filled with literary material, to articles about the candidate. On June 4, a notice appeared right below the masthead announcing that Edward Bates, a former Missouri congressman who had been one of four contending candidates for the Republican nomination, had advised his friends to “do their utmost to secure the election of Lincoln and Hamlin.” Campbell’s response indicated he was all in. “And so we go. All the candidates and everybody else joins in the support of ‘Honest Old Abe’—the next President of the United State.”

By June 11, Campbell had changed the masthead of the Intelligencer to include the Virginia Republican ticket. “For President Abraham Lincoln” was displayed in large, bold type, followed by the vice presidential candidate, Hannibal Hamlin, the district electors, and the officers of the Virginia Executive Committee, Campbell as secretary and I.M. Pumphrey, chairman. The declaration continued to run every day until the election.
The pages of the newspaper carried a myriad of campaign messages throughout the summer and fall, right up to and including on the day of the election, November 5.

Just days before the election, Campbell wrote an editorial explaining why a vote for Lincoln was important to that section of the state.

The domestic policy of Virginia has been shaped for many years back to foster the slave interest at the expense of all others and it has become necessary for the development of Western Virginia that a different system should prevail.

But there are special reasons why citizens of Virginia should be Republicans. . . . because they have been told in some quarters that they would not be allowed to vote that ticket. . . . The right to vote as a man pleases is the very corner stone of free institutions, and the man who will not assert it, and, if need be, defend it at the price of his blood, does not deserve the name of a free man. When he relinquishes that right under threats or menaces, he becomes a very slave and deserves to be treated as a slave. 51

On November 6 Campbell posted the election results for the city of Wheeling. Lincoln had fewer votes than two (Breckenridge and Bell) of the three other candidates, but Campbell was not unhappy. The Republican vote had increased from only sixty-two in 1856 to more than 600 just four years later, nearly a 1,000 percent increase for the Republican Party, he pointed out.52 When the election results for the rest of the country were received by telegraph, Campbell’s man had been elected president.

But the after-effects of the 1860 campaign were hot and bitter. Campbell observed in Wheeling that “men have been arrayed against each other, and inflamed into actual estrangement, who were formerly the best of friends.” He bemoaned the frailty of human nature, and “that weakness which makes one man unpatriotic in the eyes of his friend,” because they disagreed. “Men will become zealous, and they will let their zeal get the better of their judgement, and they will say hard things of their personal friends but political opponents, until gradually they grow cold towards each other.”53
The campaign had the same effect across the country, on states as well as individuals. During the campaign, many southerners had raised the specter of secession. The clamor over secession grew as the election drew nearer. In September, Campbell reported that the press supporting the current administration had recommended secession of the southern states if Lincoln was elected. Even on such a serious subject, Campbell couldn’t resist a humorous retort.

“Well, we rather think Mr. Lincoln will not decline on that account, nor will the voters decline to elect him,” Campbell wrote. “The editors, nourished on the government pap, will secede from the trough at which they have been feeding about the fourth of March,” which was inauguration day.54

However, after the November election, as South Carolina took the lead in the secession movement, Campbell wrote a much more serious and introspective editorial on the rationale of secession and his stance.

We know that there are many disunionists, per se, in the South, because, in our travels in the South, we have met and talked with, and practically, we may say, cognizance such a sentiment. To be aware of such a sentiment, however; to know of a truth that it seriously and menacingly exists, does not alter our opinion of it, as it has not deterred us from opposition to either its demands or its purposes. To know that South Carolina really means disunion, does not alter our opinion of the general status of the slavery question. How could it? And why should it? Is the institution any the less an evil in that it furnishes so much cause for national anxiety? Is it less important that it should be restrained in its spread, in that it entails so much jealousy and selfish distraction on the part of the States where it most abundantly exists? Assuredly not. . . . They have an institution in their midst which makes individuals overbearing and intolerant as individuals, and makes states overbearing and intolerant as States. And it is the constant never ending and still beginning exactions of this institution that has made the North unwilling any longer to subordinate the government into a mere machine for the endorsement and propagation of each new spoiled-child demand that it may make.55
For Campbell, like many others, the time would soon come when he would have to choose sides. He was supportive of the many communities in Western Virginia that began to hold Union meetings to declare opposition to the “treasonable schemes of disunionists.” Such a meeting, to be held in Wheeling on December 14, was promoted as the lead item in the *Intelligencer* for two consecutive days and reported on for two days after the meeting. Sherrard Clemens, a Democratic Virginia congressman from Wheeling, made an unexpected speech in which he condemned disunion and those who were pushing for it.

“If to be a disunionist is to be a tearer down of the American flag which gives protection everywhere to every American citizen—if to be a fire-eater, a South Carolina Salamander, is to be a Democrat, I am no longer a democrat.”

Clemens knew his stance, which met with great applause at the meeting, also would draw opposition. “For this I shall be reviled and stigmatized as unsound by a set of dirty demagogues—renegade Whigs, who are always catering to the east, but who never owned a nigger, nor never will own one, and all because I have refused to be a tail to a kite—a tail to a tad pole and wiggle in the night.”

However, Clemens bravely promised to share the same sentiments on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Over the next month similar meetings would be held in Pocahontas, Brooke, Preston, Wetzel, Kanawha, Marion, Mason, and Wood counties, throughout the western portion of Virginia. The Western Virginia counties are depicted on the map in Figure 1.
Campbell’s personal choice on the disunion issue reflected not only his loyalty to the Union, but also his loyalty to Wheeling and Western Virginia. The next campaign he would engage in would depend upon Campbell and his press to advocate a cause he strongly believed in—creation of a free soil and free labor state in the Union.

His first salvo in the campaign came on Christmas Day in 1860 with an editorial calling for the division of Virginia. The idea of dismemberment was not a new one; the subject had been seriously discussed thirty years earlier for many of the same reasons. But the contingency of secession by the mother state added urgency and passion to the
discussion. Nor was Campbell the only editor to publish his thoughts on the matter, with none in particular being responsible for the idea. The Wellsburg Herald stated that “the very fact of its being agitated at different points, from Clarksburg to Wellsburg, by the newspapers, almost simultaneously . . . is confirmation that there is . . . a strong sentiment in favor of . . . erecting the Western part of the State into a separate Commonwealth.”

Campbell opened his editorial with evidence indicating the strength of Unionism in the western part of the state. He then proceeded to explain that the disunion game was insinuating itself among the people of Western Virginia in the form of a grand countermovement to secession, having for its object a division of the state at the Blue Ridge Mountains. Admitting that the premise of the erection of a new state was not originally his own, to introduce the idea he featured the words—included in the first paragraph below—of a Virginia native who was a correspondent for the National Intelligencer. Campbell then expounded on that idea in signature fashion.

The movement . . . contemplates the erection of a new State, embracing that portion of Virginia lying west of the Blue Ridge, and destined to include as many counties east of said line along the upper Potomac and near it, as may be induced by identity of interest to co-operate in the project. . . . [that] awaits only the opportunity and the pretext to assume formidable proportions.

We fancy that this paragraph will be an eye opener to some of the disunionists. They may as well wake up and look it square in the face. There is no doubt of its truth. There is a very wide spread and spreading sentiment in Western Virginia in favor of a division of the State at the Blue Ridge. The people of Western Virginia know very well, and it is useless longer for demagogues to try to blind them or reconcile them to the fact, that they have been used as so many vassals by Eastern Virginia, and that . . . Western Virginia has suffered more from the oppressive doctrines of her Eastern brethren than ever the cotton States all put together have suffered from the Northern Personal Liberty bills.

This is so. Any one [sic] who doubts it has but to turn to the 22d and 23d clauses in our State Constitution, where he can see the iniquitous discrimination that is made against us. It is there provided that “all property, other than slaves, shall be taxed in proportion to its value.” And it is also provided that slaves under twelve years of age shall not be taxed—no odds what their value may be, whether
five hundred or five thousand dollars—and that all over twelve years of age shall be only taxed at the value of three hundred dollars worth of land, or in other words, at the bare pittance of one dollar and twenty cents. Readers who are curious about the assertion . . . can satisfy themselves not only by turning to the State Constitution, but by referring to the course of legislation at Richmond for the last twenty-five years. It will be seen that we have been treated and regarded as a separate people.

And such indeed we are. There is no affinity between Eastern and Western Virginia. There never was, and while geography and climate holds sway there never can be, assuming that eastern Virginia remains as she is, and that she is correct in her notions of her true policy. We are a great deal more distinct as a people, than the populations of Upper and Lower Canada. We are about to each other as are North and South Carolina—the one being a slave State against the grain of nature, and the other in accordance with nature. The slave population of Western Virginia is only nominal, while white population is some hundred and twenty-five or thirty thousand in excess of Eastern Virginia. The consequence is, that we suffer all the evils, without any of the benefits, of the system. We pay for the music that others are dancing to. The price of that music would be doubled, trebled, quadrupled on us, were we so insane as to consent to be hitched on to a Cotton Confederacy. Then, indeed, would our troubles be as were the troubles of Israel under Solomon and Rehoboam. The effect would be to depopulate Western Virginia of her best and most enterprising citizens. The population of this city in the next decade would retrograde one-third. Make us a foreign city to Ohio and Pennsylvania, and grass will grow in every street in this city next summer. We will sink, sink and sink, until we become a sort of an old, dull, moneyless Mexican town, that subsists by catching a copper once and a while from a traveler, and eking out a miserable little trade with the country immediately about it. This will be our condition. And it will be that of every town and hamlet in Western Virginia. In view of these facts, then is it not time that we wakened up to our true interests. Is it not time that we . . . give Eastern Virginia to understand that, if she goes into a Cotton Confederacy, she goes alone, and without Western Virginia.61

The stage had been set for a drama in which Campbell would be required to draw upon the strength and diversity of the network he had established and continued to expand. He would be called upon to deploy, with his pen and person, all of the characteristics that he had honed through practicing oration: strength and clearness, dignity and elevation, ease and gracefulness, the power to fix people’s attention, to convince the understanding, to kindle the imagination, and to touch and subdue the heart.
The commencement of 1861 was to bring uncertainty, difficult decisions, and considerable professional opportunity; it would be a signal year for Campbell’s reputation.

Notes


3. “Gus Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” December 19, 1858, AWC.
8. “Rev. Dr. Ferguson,” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, December 17, 1858, CA.
9. “Gus Campbell to A.W. Campbell.”
10. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. “Scrapbook. Newspaper Clipping from the Intelligencer. The Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of Robert Burns.,” January 24, 1859, AWC. Other articles written by Jane Campbell and published on December 25, 1864; August 30, 1865; and March 1866 are included in the scrapbook.
27. “Jane Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” March 23, 1860, AWC. Per a letter on July 16, 1859, Campbell’s mother, Phebe Campbell, also sent him book critiques she had written, although he may not have published them.
28. Sharon M. Harris, and Robin L. Cadwallader, eds., Rebecca Harding Davis’s Stories of the Civil War Era, Selected Writing from the Borderlands (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2010), xii.
29. Jane Campbell, Diary (Morgantown, WV, 1916 1909), Jane Campbell Dawson Diary and Other Material, WRHC.
30. “Rebecca Davis to A.W. Campbell,” n.d., AWC. In her diary, Jane Campbell Dawson wrote a brief tribute to her friend upon Harding’s death. While Harding’s letter is not dated, a letter from Jane Campbell on March 23, 1860 to A.W. Campbell, she asks Campbell give Miss Rebecka her care, indicating that the two were still on friendly terms as of that date.
31. “Miss Annie Will Be at Home” March 13, 1860, AWC.
33. “Jane Campbell to A.W. Campbell.”
35. Harris, and Cadwallader, Rebecca Harding Davis’s Stories of the Civil War Era, Selected Writing from the Borderlands, XVII.
38. “J.E. Jacob to A.W. Campbell,” March 23, 1860, WVRHC.
44. “From the Cincinnati Commercial, Virginia Republican Convention.”
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
50. “For President Abraham Lincoln,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 11, 1860, CA.
52. “The Vote in Ohio County for President,” Wheeling Intelligencer, November 7, 1860, CA.
56. “Union at the South,” Wheeling Intelligencer, November 15, 1860, CA.
58. Ibid.
Chapter 4: Spring 1861—The Secession Crisis

Arouse to the work which is before you! Show to the world that you have a Government, and that that flag, symbol of a mighty nation, shall “still wave o’er the land of the free and the home of the brave.” Freemen of Western Virginia what say you?
—Wheeling Daily Intelligencer

The election of November 1860 was a catalyst for historic change. After the election of a Republican president, Abraham Lincoln, South Carolina declared secession from the Union on December 20. Before the year ended, several southern states were in line to follow the “Palmetto Republic.”1 Uncertainty about the future was the order of the day and as a result, Campbell’s life and environment became increasingly hectic; his well-grounded temperament helped him to overcome each new challenge faced. A talented wordsmith, Campbell’s pen also would elicit action from others, a quality that served him and his causes well in the midst of nationwide havoc.

As the year 1861 began, one thing was certain: Archie Campbell needed help at the Intelligencer. “We are busy entertaining a throng of visitors who drop in from morning until night wanting to know the latest news,” Campbell said about the situation.2

On the first day of January 1861, Campbell penned a letter to Granville Hall, a young man who had worked at the Intelligencer in 1859, a fellow member of the Republican Party, and a Virginia state elector.3 “I thought of writing to you for some time in a confidential way and learning from you what now are and what will be in future your business arrangements,” Campbell wrote.4 At the time, Hall was serving as a shorthand reporter in the United States Senate.5
“It is said here among my friends (I only repeat what they say) that I will be Post Master in this city if ever Old Abe gets a chance at Washington,” Campbell continued. “There seems to be even more than a probability that I will get it.”

“What I want to say is to ask you how you would like to come up here and stay in the office until the appointment is made and then if you choose take a clerkship in it or else report & keep books in the office part or both.”

Campbell had seen the talent in Hall’s work and, although the business proceeds did not warrant a new employee—the remaining debt for the paper had been paid off little more than a month earlier—Campbell believed Hall could help the business turn a profit and relieve some of the demands the newspaper made on Campbell’s time.

“We are not the NY Tribune or any other big paying sheet. Our receipts are small and we have to cut our cloth by it,” Campbell wrote, explaining that “we now are making nothing at all—not our expenses some weeks.”

“But if I could get you into the business as I would like & one or two others out, I believe that it would be mutually beneficial. . . . Certainly with all your accomplishment as a writer and reporter you are not in your appropriate place in a business that any one. . . . could do as well.”

Hall responded, wanting more details, which Campbell provided in a letter of January 20, including a thorough report of the newspaper’s status.

“You will probably think from this we are very busy, and so we are in a certain sense . . . getting up the news, arranging the matter, & putting as much of it as possible in the paper. We are not busy however, as we like to be busy, and as pays to be busy: we are not busy with business, such as taking advertising, job work &c.”
Subscriptions, however, had “quite swelled.” The daily edition was at about 1,000 subscriptions, the weekly edition about 500, and the tri-weekly edition added a few more to the overall circulation. Campbell recognized subscriptions had increased with the recent election and talk of secession and he explained the newspaper was taking measures to “hold as many as possible of those after the excitement shall have waned.”

The affairs of the office had not changed much since 1859, when Hall had last worked there. The same personnel were getting the news to press, tending to the daily distribution, and handling local affairs. Campbell’s brother, Gus, had been hired to do the bookkeeping when Hall had left the establishment and “Dick’s Directory Machine” had been purchased to handle the subscriber lists and labeling. Campbell complimented his brother’s bookkeeping abilities, but admitted that between Hall’s departure and the hiring of Gus, Campbell and his partner McDermott had handled the books “as before you came, which as you know was quite indifferently.”

“Our idea in your coming, would be this: to give you entire charge of the books, let you straighten them up until wherever they needed it. Then keep them . . . & in a general way to be ‘first lord of the treasury.’” Hall also was to be the owners’ “co-counsellor & confidential assistant,” since the bookkeeping “would occupy you all told two hours per day. Indeed not even an hour, I think, if that.”

Almost as an afterthought, Campbell added, “We would want you or as you felt inclined or as it might specially be needed to write some, & if anything was on the topics at a meeting to report it.” Unknown to either Campbell or Hall, the last assignment would become one of the most important in just a few months when the Western
Virginians gathered in Wheeling to create a contingency plan in case Virginia decided to join other southern states in secession.

Campbell offered to pay Hall’s former salary until the time Campbell was appointed postmaster, “in May—perhaps—in April & maybe not until 1st June,” after which Hall’s pay would be raised to $500 per year. Hall accepted the offer and joined the newspaper in early 1861. Campbell, relieved of some of his duties at the newspaper, remained busy with political issues while he waited for news about the postmaster appointment.

The presidential election results and the prevalent threats of secession spurred many of the citizens of Western Virginia to declare allegiances. In January, the number of communities throughout Western Virginia holding “Union Meetings,” in declaration of their loyalty to the United States and disapproval of secession, increased. When the Virginia General Assembly declared the federal government had no power to force seceding states to remain in the Union, public demands were made for a state convention to discuss Virginia’s position on secession. Legislation was passed calling for an election to be held on February 4 to choose delegates to the convention and to indicate whether any action the state might take regarding secession should be subject to voter approval. The state legislature resolved that if differences between conflicting sections of the country could not be settled, Virginia should join the southern states.

Sherrard Clemens, who had given a stirring oration against secession at the Wheeling Union meeting in December, held true to his promise and delivered the speech to the U.S. House of Representatives on January 22. In a letter to Campbell, Clemens claimed he was “in the midst of a fan ovation here such as my children will one day be
proud” and said that “224,000 copies of my speech are subscribed for, & I have more applicants than I can supply.” Clemens went on in his letter to say he did not want to run for representative to the Virginia Convention, but if his election was “inevitable, use my name, if any good can result to the cause.” He then instructed Campbell to announce that he would be making speeches about his position on the issue of secession throughout the region, giving the dates, times, and locations for seven such events.

Clemens was a Democrat, but Campbell did not care what party the convention representatives belonged to, as long as they were against secession. He admonished readers to “Vote first for a man on account of his soundness on the Union; vote next for him for his intellectual qualification—but in every instance sacrifice the latter where there is doubt about the former. Let no traitor work himself into an election.”

On February 4 Clemens was elected, along with Chester D. Hubbard, to represent the district that included Wheeling at the convention in Richmond. One of the losing candidates was J. H. Pendleton, from whom Campbell had purchased the Intelligencer.

On the same day, a letter was sent to President-elect Lincoln by the chairman and acting secretary of the Virginia Republican Executive Committee stating that A.W. Campbell had been unanimously appointed to “proceed at once to Springfield to see Hon. A. Lincoln the President elect, in furtherance of the action of the Committee” regarding appointment of a local Republican to a seat in Lincoln’s Cabinet. With his visit to the president-elect, Campbell had yet another opportunity to make an impression on Lincoln
that might assure him of the postmaster’s position in Wheeling being awarded in recognition of Campbell’s support during the election.

By February 13 Campbell had completed his trip to Illinois and proceeded to Richmond for the first day of the Virginia Convention. Campbell attended as a correspondent, writing frequent updates for the *Intelligencer* in which he shared in-depth reports for the citizens of the western counties about the sessions and the atmosphere of the capital city. While convention discussions began in a friendly manner, the hostility grew between Unionists and secessionists as the convention progressed. In late February, Campbell reported that a public “indignation meeting,” held to denounce a speaker who had given a strong speech on the convention floor in favor of the Union, saw a crowd in “the number of hundreds, turned out in the streets, with an effigy [of the speaker] in hands . . . ready to be lighted on signal.” The group proceeded to the hotel where the speaker was staying, and there formed into a mass “from a thousand to fifteen hundred strong.”24 The heated debate and speeches for and against either side of the issue continued at the convention for two months.

Campbell, however, left Richmond in the first week of March, bound for Washington. While there, he sent a note from the Senate Reporter’s Gallery to Senator Edward Baker, of Oregon, who was a good friend of Lincoln. “I had not an opportunity to see you today about the ticket for tomorrow of which I spoke to you last night. I will consider myself under lasting obligations to you if you will be so good as to get one . . . and send it up to me by one of the pages.”25 The note was dated March 3; the inaugural ceremonies and ball were held on the next day, March 4.
Before Campbell had returned home from Lincoln’s inauguration, another political issue had arisen, one with personal implications for Campbell. Clemens had written a letter to Lincoln on the day of his inauguration requesting that the president avoid filling any patronage positions in Virginia—offices and jobs given in recognition of political support—until any action taken at the Richmond Convention was ratified by the people of the state. Such a delay, or possible defeat, could affect Campbell’s expected appointment by Lincoln to the postmaster’s position in Wheeling. Clemens believed awarding patronage positions in Virginia would further antagonize internal state sentiments against the federal administration.

“Abstain from throwing the apple of discord in our midst under assurances that the Republican Party can be built up in our commonwealth by the patronage of the Federal government,” Clemens wrote. “Be assured, Sir, the exercise of your executive powers in that state now will only heap up the obstacles against which the Union men have now to contend.”

As was the norm for the period, Campbell believed in the spoils of political victory and having a personal stake in the situation, he took quick action using two of the most powerful weapons in his arsenal, his pen and his political friends. On March 16 Campbell drafted a letter to Lincoln that was signed by him and ten others. More than half of the signatories had been delegates to the Chicago Republican Convention and had placed their support behind Lincoln’s nomination, giving him an opportunity to appear on the ticket.

The undersigned. . . would beg leave to enter a respectful protest, against what they consider an unwarrantable interference on the part of the Hon. Sherrard Clemens, with the policy of your administration so far as it relates to the federal
patronage belonging to this Section of Virginia. We are credibly informed and some of us know of our own knowledge that he has & is seeking to control the dispensation of that patronage, not, of course, for the benefit of Republican principles, but, as we believe, to promote his re-election to congress from this district. 27

Campbell claimed Clemens, who was a Democrat, was “the implacable enemy of our principles, & who within a few days back only has written letters to gentlemen in this city describing a recent interview which he had with your Excellency . . . in which he caricatures your manners, your principles and your intellect in terms too gross and indecent for us to repeat.” 28

The next day Campbell wrote another letter to Lincoln, personally, to alert him to the fact that the caricature he had mentioned would be published in the next day’s Intelligencer, based on Clemens’s original remarks. Campbell enclosed a proof of the publication and promised to send a copy of the paper the next day, saying the president “will be qualified to judge of what weight are his suggestions about patronage and the Union cause here. . . . Mr Lincoln! Your friends in this district are the 1600 men who voted for you—not Breckenridge fellows like Sherrard Clemens . . . who would follow you to your fame to get hold of your patronage in order to promote his reelection, & then stab you privately when gone out from your presence.” 29

The letter printed in the Intelligencer referred to Lincoln as “a cross between a sand-hill crane and Andalusian jackass. He is, by all odds, the weakest man who has ever been elected. . . . I believe Virginia, under his follies and puerilities will secede,” Clemens had written. The letter went on to explain how Clemens had formed this opinion. 30
“I was sent for by him. I speak what I know. He is vain, weak, puerile, hypocritical, without manners, without moral grace, and, as he talks to you, punches his fist under your ribs. . . . I have lost all respect for him. He is surrounded by a set of toad-eaters and bottle holders, and . . . I am perfectly satisfied he is an Abolitionist.”

The letter spread quickly to be widely printed in the nation’s press. Writing to C.D. Hubbard, who was in Richmond at the state convention, Campbell asked if he had any inside news about who might run for congressman from the district that included Wheeling, the position Clemens filled at that time. “The thing is dormant here. Clemens is regarded as a dead cock in the pit. You read his letter, I presume, about ‘Old Abe’? Every body [sic] thinks it shamefull. I am sorry that a man I ever voted for or supported should do such an unjust as well as silly thing.”

But Clemens wasn’t finished. On March 22 he again wrote to Lincoln, this time with alarm that the removal of current officers from positions in Virginia—to be replaced with Lincoln appointees—was “complete folly” and would trigger civil war in Virginia. Clemens declared that forces in Virginia were “ready for revolution . . . for anarchy. . . . A reign of terror exists here, & the courage to meet it, and overcome it, is not wanting, but we cannot, withstand the insanity of a party, which, in a time like the present occupies itself in peddling the pennies to tide waiters, and party jannaisaries [sic].”

On March 25, John C. Underwood, who often kept Campbell apprised of things happening behind the scenes in the party, sent a letter to Campbell updating him on the activity regarding the original letter that had advised Lincoln to award no patronage.

“Several Virginians called on Mr. Lincoln today to learn his policy in respect to our appointments. He replied that he must pursue a cautious policy.” Underwood said
Lincoln produced Clemens’s letter advising him to make no appointments from Virginia and “especially not to make a change in the Post Office at Wheeling.”

“We are doing all we can to oppose Clemens’ policy, but the pacific & cautious course which the President deems necessary is causing a delay most uncomfortable. Suppose you make up a party at Wheeling come on & lend us a helping hand.”

What Underwood didn’t know when he wrote was that Campbell’s postmaster appointment had been confirmed by the Senate just days earlier, on March 21. The appointment became official on March 23.

Meanwhile, the Virginia Convention, still in session, continued to grow more divisive with a demarcation between the stances of the eastern and western state delegates becoming more pronounced. On the convention’s forty-fifth day, reports were received in Richmond that South Carolina forces had attacked Fort Sumter. In a response to an inquiry by Virginia’s governor, John Letcher, South Carolina’s governor verified that the report was true. “Fort Sumter was bombarded all day yesterday. . . . The war has commenced. Please let me know what Virginia will do.”

With the news, the debate became heated and clearly indicated the differences between east and west. “We are not to be controlled in our action here by threats . . . to the West,” declared Waitman T. Willey, representative from Monongalia County. “We stand perfectly free and perfectly independent, and so we will stand so long as the eternal mountains raise their heads.”

Wiley’s response to a representative from Middlesex County, in the eastern part of the state, expressed the feelings of many in the western counties.
As to the insinuation of the gentleman . . . in regard to the want of fidelity in the Western character, I hurl it back, as I have hurled back such insinuation from the beginning. I say here, that if the worst comes to the worst, it will be again as it has been heretofore: Western men will have to fight your battles. It is our own mountain men that you must rely at last for the vindication of Virginia’s rights, Virginia’s honor, and Virginia’s integrity. . . . I ask whether it may not be worth the consideration of Eastern gentlemen to pause and reflect before, by any action of theirs, they alienate their best friends—the friends of whom they may soon stand in the greatest need?  

Finally, on April 17, an Ordinance of Secession for the State of Virginia was passed at the convention, eighty-eight votes to fifty-five. Only twelve of the votes in favor of secession were from delegates in the western counties of the state.

That same evening many of the Western Virginia delegates left the city unexpectedly by train. When Clemens and Hubbard, the Wheeling delegates, arrived home, the Intelligencer said “they had good reason to look well to their personal safety. The revolution of treason was bursting out in all its fury upon the streets, and that night on which they left there was to be a grand mob procession . . . known to be capable of anything and no Union man was safe.”

Earlier in the day, some of the mob had gone to the boarding house where Marion County delegate John Carlile was staying and “flung halters [nooses] up before his chamber window, and . . . insulted and outraged him” in any every way they could. Carlile left with the others that evening. Before returning home, Carlile traveled to Washington to update the president on Virginia’s secession action.

Those few Western Virginia delegates who remained in the city the next day were required to obtain travel passes from the governor before they were permitted to leave.

The ordinance that passed, “to repeal the ratification of the constitution of the United States of America . . . and to resume all the rights and powers granted under” it,
was to be ratified by the people of the state before taking effect. There was little hope that the citizens would reject secession, or that their vote would matter, so the Western Virginians determined to create a contingency plan.

Within five days of the ordinance passing, some of the delegates from the northwest called a mass meeting in Clarksburg, Harrison County. According to the Intelligencer, between 1,000 and 1,200 people attended, “without reference to party” to “consider what steps are necessary and proper for the northwestern counties to take now, in view of the treason and rebellion which holds sway over the Eastern and Valley positions of the State.” Afterward, a notice went out by special messengers to the Union men in every county in the northwest calling for them to appoint delegates to a convention that would be held in Wheeling on May 13, a meeting that would become known as the First Wheeling Convention or the May Convention.

Campbell saw the outcome of the Clarksburg meeting as a reason to celebrate. Alongside a report on the proceedings, the Intelligencer proclaimed the uncompromising loyalty of Unionists in Western Virginia.

We point the country with pride and patriotic exultation to the Union uprisings in Northwestern Virginia. Our paper for days past has teemed with the evidences of the attachment of our people to the stars and stripes, and to-day [sic] we publish further evidences. Northwestern Virginia is sound. She will neither be coaxed or [sic] driven into the schemes of the traitors. On the contrary she will stand like the exposed Swiss Cantons in the days of treason, “a living wall—a human wood” against the rebels and confederates. God bless our Northwest!

News traveled quickly about the prospective uprising against secession. Brooke County attorney George Caldwell wrote to Lincoln on April 25 to call “attention to an undertaking on the part of loyal citizens of Western Va. relative to the removal of the capital west of the Allegheny Mountains.” Caldwell told the president that a meeting
would soon be held “to determine where the seat of government for said State shall be. . . . We wish to avoid and will resist to the last extremity the aggressions” of the secession ordinance. He went on to explain that armed resistance by eastern Virginia was expected, asking if the loyal people “could rely upon any assistance from the Fed. Government.”

For several days after the announcement of the impending Wheeling Convention, the city received no mail from Richmond. The Intelligencer relied upon reports from other publications to learn about the plans of the state government in the capital; the news fomented fear in addition to the Western Virginians’ indignation.

The Philadelphia Bulletin relayed information from a gentleman who had traveled from Richmond that “a good many soldiers were in Richmond” and Virginia’s governor had designated Wheeling as a military rendezvous point. The claim was supported by stories in other newspapers, including the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

“The people of the ‘Panhandle,’ and of all Western Virginia, now have full notice that they are to be subdued to secession by making Wheeling a point of rendezvous for part of the army of Governor Letcher.” The Dispatch also said it had received a letter from Fairmont, populated primarily by Union loyalists, that some local residents had gone to Richmond to obtain arms for the secessionists of the area. The letter alerted Union men of Wheeling to watch for arms arriving over the Baltimore railroad, “for just as certain as fate they have been ordered, and may be expected by any train.” If the Union men “really mean to do anything to help themselves, they have not a moment to lose,” the Dispatch warned the people of Wheeling.

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Campbell reminded readers that secession had been effectively declared without the people’s approval, a ratification step that had been demanded during the February vote. Indeed, on the day after the ordinance of secession had been passed by the convention, the Virginia government had agreed upon and established an allegiance with the Confederacy, without waiting on the vote of the state’s citizens. Campbell explained the travesty of the situation.

“See what a mockery and scorn has been made of your decree, solemnly recorded by a majority of sixty thousand on the 4th of February Inst, that no ordinance of secession shall be binding until passed upon by the people and ratified by them. Instead of this, all the power you reserved to yourselves has been usurped.”

Pointing to the words of the Richmond Enquirer, Campbell said that although the ordinance was to be voted upon, it was “simply as a matter of form and not of contest.” He called the vote “meaningless, empty, cruel counterfeit.”

There is no possible chance for it to fail, and it would be of no earthly account to the Union men of the State, if even in despite of all this high handed treason and usurpation, it were voted down. The State is in revolution now. The ordinance is worded to take effect from its passage. It is as much in effect now as it ever will be.

By this ordinance every vestige of liberty and franchise — every attribute of free citizenship — all that we have held dear as freemen — all that we can hope or expect in the future, is blasted and blotted out.

Campbell and the Intelligencer amplified the calls for nonpartisan loyalty to the Union by northwestern Virginians.

“In this hour of our deadliest peril . . . throw aside and tremple [sic] under foot the last vestige of partyism. Let it be blotted from your remembrance that you have ever been
divided as partisans, but keep simply and only before your minds the one great, momentous truth, that if you falter or fail now, your all is gone.”

In his typical “take action” manner, Campbell promoted the upcoming Wheeling Convention as an opportunity for men to take the fate of the region into their own hands.

“All energy of your mind and heart and strength, and let the traitors who desecrate our borders see, and let the world abroad see, and let history in all after time record it, that there was one green spot . . . where unyielding patriotism rallied and gathered, and stood, and won a noble triumph.”

Campbell’s language was lofty, but an effective early volley in the war of public opinion, which was recognized as valuable by the leaders of the impending Western Virginia uprising. Willey wrote to Hubbard a week before the convention: “What we want . . . at present . . . is an overwhelming vote in the N. West, against the ordinance. Any further and ultra movement on our part, at the present time, I think would be premature, and prejudicial to the ultimate accomplishment of N. Western independence. . . . My own opinion is that the mission of the Wheeling Convention will be to inaugurate measures for the influencing and concentrating of . . . public opinion.”

The convention convened in Wheeling’s Washington Hall on May 13, with delegates and reporters being issued tickets for reserved seating. The Intelligencer reported “a large number of those ubiquitous gentlemen, the reporters, are busy with their hierroglyphics [sic]. They telegraph each evening to their respective papers full reports of the doings of the Convention, and we presume that few of the delegates fully realize the attention which their deliberations are attracting.” Reporters from the New York Herald, the New York Times, Cincinnati Gazette, Pittsburgh Chronicle, Pittsburgh Dispatch,
Cleveland *Morning Leader*, and Chicago *Press & Tribune* were listed among those who were in Wheeling for the event.\(^5^9\)

During the proceedings, Carlile “referred to the presence of the representatives of the New-York press, particularly *The Herald* and *Times*, and called attention to the importance of their movements, as they were regarded by the country at large.”\(^6^0\)

Locally, Campbell assigned Granville Hall, the young man he had recently hired to work for the *Intelligencer*, to cover the meetings. Hall had “not the slightest official relation” to the Convention, but he was allowed to write on a table in front of the President’s desk, although the “privilege was not agreeable to some of the members who were not accustomed to have their speeches reported.” The shorthand skills Hall had used as a Senate reporter proved to be of value; every day Hall transcribed the entire proceedings, although only a portion of his notes would be used for the columns of the *Intelligencer*, due to what Hall referred to as “limited space and meager facilities.”\(^6^1\)

However, his thorough documents were the basis for the lengthy reports featured in the *Intelligencer*, filling more than half a page of the newspaper each day.\(^6^2\)

The *Intelligencer* reports resulting from Hall’s assignment, literally, wrote the history of a new state. More than forty years later, after the state of West Virginia had been established, the official journals of the proceedings for this convention and another held in June 1861 could not be found—supposedly lost during a major flood in 1884. Hall’s reports for the *Intelligencer* were compiled and printed by state archivist Virgil A. Lewis, in 1909, as the official record of the proceedings. Lewis noted that the reporter’s “journals” transcribed from the newspaper file were “no doubt, as accurate, and fuller and more complete, than the routine journals kept by the Secretaries of these Conventions. In
addition to the record of routine business, they contain much of the discussions and debates, with addresses to the people, and ordinances, and other documents not usually found in the journals of deliberative bodies.”

The May Convention solidified northwest Virginia’s commitment against secession, proclaiming such an action to be unwise, unconstitutional, and “a policy utterly ruinous to all the material interests of our section, severing all our social ties and drying up all the channels of our trade and prosperity.”

In the likely event that the Virginia ordinance of secession was ratified by a vote, the delegates called for those counties represented at the Wheeling Convention and “all others disposed to co-operate with us” to appoint delegates to convene in a second convention in June to “devise such measure and take such action as the safety and welfare of the people they represent may demand.”

One consideration already put forward was division of Virginia to immediately create a new state in the Union, which was not favored by all delegates and had been pointed out by the press as being forbidden by the United States Constitution. “The admission in the Constitution of a right to divide a State . . . would be an admission of the principle of secession, a principle against which the letter and spirit of the Constitution are set like granite,” the New York World explained in an article reprinted in the Intelligencer.

The Intelligencer summed up the convention proceedings, saying that the delegates’ “earnest and unanimous desire was to uphold the Union, and secure the interests and protection of Northwestern Virginia in the Union. On this they were a unit. How to do it . . . they could not agree.” Regardless of the way it would be
accomplished, northwestern Virginia’s loyalty to the Union effectively marked the beginning of its own secession from the mother commonwealth.

As expected, Virginia’s citizens voted for secession on May 23, but the northwestern section of the state voted soundly against it. “Some twenty-four or five counties in Western Virginia have now been heard from since the election, and they one and all have given Union majorities ranging from three up to three thousand,” the Intelligencer proclaimed.

They have utterly and scornfully and indignantly rejected it, and have declared most unmistakably that they are determined never to live under any other banner than the glorious stars and stripes. . . . With such a vote as has been cast in favor of devotion to the Union, the delegates will come up to the June convention full of the pluck and fire of their constituents, and sustained as they will be by the arms of the Government and the sympathy of the country.  

The Western Virginians were to see benefits from their show of loyalty very quickly. On May 25, the Post Office Department issued a letter to Wheeling’s postmaster, Campbell, indicating recognition of the section’s loyalty.

All postal services in the seceding States will be suspended from the 21st Inst. Letters mailed for offices closed by this decree will be forwarded to the Dead Letter Office, except those in Western Virginia, which will be sent to Wheeling. It is not intended by this order to deprive the Union men of Western Virginia of their postal service.

A clarification to the instruction was sent about a week later, saying the notice of suspension was not intended to apply to Union counties of Western Virginia and that all routes previously supplied with mail would be continued. Any post offices that had discontinued their services in that section were to resume at once and if a loyal county was not receiving mail, that county’s postmaster should apply to the Wheeling postmaster to do so.
Campbell’s duties as postmaster were to become more complex with the onset of war, especially in light of the shifting loyalties and heavy fighting in some of the interior and southernmost counties in Western Virginia. Mail from any seceded state that arrived without postage pre-paid by stamps was to be forwarded to the dead letter office at Washington and mail service was inconsistent to some parts of Western Virginia. Mail to Randolph, Webster, Gilmer, and Braxton counties was discontinued in late June. The mail route from Point Pleasant to Kanawha (now Charleston) also had been suspended until further notice. Mail sent to these areas was to be redirected to other Western Virginia post offices that varied by location.

The Wheeling post office was on the ground floor of the Custom House, which had opened in 1859 to house various federal agencies. The imposing building was located between the railroad station and the point where the National Road—the first major improved highway to be built by the federal government connecting the Potomac and Ohio Rivers for westward travel—crossed the Ohio River over the Wheeling suspension bridge. When the Custom House was being built, Campbell claimed it was “so high as to almost shade the window” of the Intelligencer office, which was about a block away. He predicted that the splendid structure, “with the post office and other government offices, will doubtless change the aspect of that portion of the city in which it is situated, and draw around it, in time, a good part of the city’s business and attractive.”

Ten clerks and a porter, in addition to the postmaster, worked in the postal facility, which occupied the entire first floor of the Custom House. The district courtroom was on the third floor, and offices made up the second floor.
Prior to the secession issues that caused postal interruptions in 1861, the office had distributed mail directly to 150 counties and to all cities of the country indirectly. Campbell explained that “a great quantity of mail matter is sent to Wheeling to be distributed on account of its central location.”

Campbell, as postmaster, was one of eight federal officers who had responsibilities within the Custom House. In addition to the post office, the building housed the surveyor of customs, two local steamboat inspectors, a district judge and clerk, a marshal, and a United States attorney. Thomas Hornbrook, the surveyor of customs and ex-officio collector, was the custodian of public buildings and primary overseer of the Custom House, with each officer having portions of the building within his control. The beginning of the war demanded supervision of trade and travel, a duty that fell to Hornbrook as the customs officer. To carry out the increased responsibility, aides were authorized under his direction to supervise the trade of the state and its surroundings for the public good.

It may have been in such a role that Campbell was appointed, in June, by Ohio Governor William Dennison to help enforce a proclamation of the federal authorities regarding contraband. Campbell was to stop flour, grain, produce, and other articles that might be considered provisions, from being shipped via the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

“I . . . returned word to Gov. Dennison that . . . I would much prefer that he would exonerate me from further action,” Campbell told Intelligencer readers. “If shippers here are known to violate that order their supplies from Ohio will be cut off, as indeed, it is apprehended, all supplies for this side of the river.” He published the news to alert businesses in the city that not following the order could inconvenience the entire city.
through an embargo and hoped that readers who were “busy on the streets . . .
representing that I was, of my own notion, interfering with the shipments of business
houses” would do him “the justice to correct their mistakes.”

Whether he did so of his “own notion” or by direction from others, Campbell
stepped up to address challenges that arose as a result of the secession crisis. In so doing,
he demonstrated his refusal to be terrorized by threats and his ability to accomplish what
he set out to do. His tactics were often self-serving and they sometimes took on an
unpleasant delivery, such as smearing Clemens’s reputation in an effort to protect the
patronage, but they also could reflect genuine appreciation and generosity, as did his
employment offer to Hall.

Campbell expanded his professional responsibilities, adding the duties of
postmaster to those of editor and found the two positions complemented each other well
during this period of uncertainty. As postmaster, an officer at a federal facility, a leader of
the political party in power, and an established leader in the community, Campbell was
positioned at the center of many sources of information. Additionally, his offices were
both physically located between Wheeling’s two major routes of ingress and egress—the
railroad and the National Road—providing convenient observation of the comings and
goings in the city, including the military movements in and out of Wheeling. This insider
advantage would help the Intelligencer to become an in-demand source of information
about the division of Virginia and the Civil War. Having the press at his disposal allowed
him to easily share information that aided postal and other federal agencies in getting out
public notices in support of the Union’s growing wartime needs.
Despite these advantages, his greatest asset was still his pen. His impassioned editorials, letters, and reports in support of the Union and the division of Virginia would continue to provide hope to a region and a nation in the midst of uncertainty and fear. Without knowing it, he had already helped to write the history of a new state when he assigned Hall to cover the Wheeling conventions. However, his greatest contributions in that arena had not yet been made. As the movement toward independence from Virginia encountered constitutional barriers, Campbell’s devotion to the cause would call upon his skills to help mold public opinion in favor of West Virginia statehood.

Notes

Epigraph. *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, May 13, 1861
2. “A.W. Campbell to G.D. Hall,” January 20, 1861, Granville Davisson Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.
4. “A.W. Campbell to G.D. Hall,” January 1, 1861, Granville Davisson Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
18. “Sherrard Clemens to A.W. Campbell,” January 23, 1861, AWC.
20. “Sherrard Clemens to A.W. Campbell.”
21. “Keep This in Mind,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, January 21, 1861, CA.
22. With the start of the Civil War, J.H. Pendleton moved his family back to his home in Louisa County, Virginia and joined the Confederate Army. He returned to Wheeling in 1871 and resumed his law practice.

23. “J.M. Pumphrey and Thomas Hornbrook to Abraham Lincoln,” February 4, 1861, ALP.

24. “From Richmond, A Revolutionary Scene—the Temer of the Mob—Letter from Wetzel County,” Wheeling Intelligencer, March 2, 1861, CA. Reports submitted by Campbell were titled “From Richmond, Special Correspondence of the Intelligencer” and closed with the letter C. Other reports are contained in the issues of February 19, February 22, February 25, February 27, March 1, and March 4.


26. “Sherrard Clemens to Abraham Lincoln,” March 4, 1861, ALP.

27. “A.W. Campbell and Others to Abraham Lincoln,” March 16, 1861, AWC.

28. Ibid.

29. “A.W. Campbell to Abraham Lincoln,” March 17, 1861, ALP.

30. Ibid.

31. “Not Very Complimentary,” Wheeling Intelligencer, March 18, 1861, CA. Years later Campbell noted in his scrapbook, next to a copy of the article, that it “made quite a sensation against Clemens when it came out. I really think Clemens entertained about the opinion expressed.”

32. “A.W. Campbell to C.D. Hubbard,” March 19, 1861, Campbell and Patterson Family Papers, WH1264, Western History Collection, Denver Public Library.

33. “Sherrard Clemens to Abraham Lincoln,” March 22, 1861, ALP. Clemens succumbed to the system a year later when he was in line for appointment to the judgeship of the Eastern District Court, in New Orleans. He wrote an apologetic letter to Lincoln on May 6, 1862, claiming he was never hesitant to acknowledge a wrong and praising Lincoln’s official conduct, saying it had redeemed any hasty prejudice Clemens may have had about Lincoln. He also asked that his earlier words not be used to complicate or clog the application.

34. “J.C. Underwood to A.W. Campbell,” March 25, 1861, AWC.

35. Ibid.

36. “Telegram, L.M. Bell to Wheeling Intelligencer,” March 21, 1861, AWC.


40. Ibid.

41. “Our Delegates,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 20, 1861, CA.

42. Ibid.

43. “From Richmond,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 27, 1861, CA.


46. “Northwestern Virginia--Great Movement in Harrison County for a Separate Organization of the Northwest from the Seceders,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 25, 1861, CA.

47. Wheeling became the epicenter of the counter-movement against secession and later the grassroots movement for separate statehood for West Virginia. Although it may seem an unlikely choice, being located in the extreme northern panhandle, the geographic location was one of the reasons that city was
chosen. The northern counties of Virginia were the most advanced in industry and transportation. Wheeling was a hub for the major routes westward, where the Ohio River, B&O Railroad and the National Road converged. Its natural resources and industrial progress connected it most directly to the northern, eastern, and western markets where goods made in the city were sold. Wheeling was the second largest city in the state of Virginia, second only to the capital city of Richmond. However, Virginia’s taxation favored large agricultural operations with slave labor, therefore the prosperity of Wheeling caused businessmen to pay what they thought was an unfair burden of taxes that were put into improvements in other parts of the state, mostly in eastern Virginia. During the secession crisis, Wheeling was convenient because of its size and ability to travel to the city, by river or rail, more easily than most places in the western counties, but was located at a safe distance from Richmond, which became the Confederate capital. The panhandle also was flanked by Ohio and Pennsylvania, both of which would provide additional protection to the city in order to protect their own borders.

49. “George W. Caldwell to Abraham Lincoln,” April 25, 1861, ALP.
50. “From Richmond.”
51. “Plans of the Secessionists about Wheeling,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 27, 1861, CA.
52. Lewis, How West Virginia Was Made, 15–16.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. “Waitman T. Willey to Chester D. Hubbard,” May 6, 1861, Hubbard Family Papers, WVRHC
58. “Notice to Delegates,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 13, 1861, CA.
61. Granville Davison Hall, “Autobiographical Memorandum” March 19, 1924, Granville Davison Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.
63. Lewis, How West Virginia Was Made, 5. Also, see Granville D. Hall Papers for an autobiographical note including this information.
64. “West’n Virginia Convention, Third Day.”
65. Ibid.
70. “About the Mails,” Wheeling Daily Intelligencer, June 5, 1861, CA.
74. “The News (Custom House),” Wheeling Daily Intelligencer, May 27, 1858, CA.
76. John Bowman, “Wheeling: Birthplace of the American Steamboat,” Archiving Wheeling, July 19, 2015, http://www.archivingwheeling.org/blog/wheeling-birthplace-of-the-american-steamboat/ Many steamboats were built in Wheeling, requiring inspectors by law. The first steamboat with a flat-bottomed hull and high-pressure steam engines was built in Wheeling in 1816. That boat, the Washington, was the prototype of all future western river steamboats, earning Wheeling the title Birthplace of the American Steamboat.
78. Ibid.
Chapter 5: May–June 1861—The Press and the Loyal Rebellion

If questionable powers have been assumed, it was at the demand of public opinion. The overwhelming necessity, the safety of the capital, the safety of the public honor, the safety of the Union, and above all, the safety of the public liberty.
—Wheeling Intelligencer

In May 1861, Wheeling fully entered the War of the Rebellion, as the Civil War was referred to at that time, with the first portentous movement of troops from the city, by train, into other parts of Western Virginia. Throughout the duration of the war Campbell and the Intelligencer would keep vigil over threats to the region from political enemies and armed troops. Fear was rampant among many of the residents of Western Virginia, never knowing if one army or the other would raid their homes or whether their neighbors, or family, were of an opposing persuasion and planning harm to anyone who dared disagree about allegiance. Campbell was no stranger to this divergence of loyalties; his cousin, Alexander Campbell Jr., was among those who joined the Confederate army, causing a major rift within his own family.¹

The delegates who met in the Wheeling Conventions, planning to maintain a loyal Union government for the region, had personal reasons for anxiety. The outcome of the war was unknown. In the event of a victorious Confederacy, Western Virginia would likely be punished severely for treason to the Commonwealth, especially those individuals who led the cause. During the First Wheeling Convention, the Cincinnati Commercial had noted “a very disproportionate amount of eloquence expended . . . upon the danger which they would incur from committing treason. The number and variety of allusions in the speeches to hanging, halter, and hemp, as the probable reward of exercising the bold resolve . . . is certainly surprising.”²
During the crisis Campbell’s words and actions radiated confidence and optimism, mobilizing public opinion in favor of Western Virginia and the Union. Many looked to the *Intelligencer* for reassurance and hope, as well as information, about the strength of the Union cause they had chosen to support. Campbell did not fail them.

From the beginning of the Richmond Convention, the *Intelligencer* had extensively covered the pro-Union movement in Western Virginia, often sending Granville Hall to functions as a traveling correspondent. The *Wellsburg Herald’s* observation of the newspaper’s content, in early May, was typical weekly fare.

The Wheeling *Intelligencer* all this week has been full and fairly overflowing with glorious intelligence from all parts of Western Virginia, in reference to the Union sentiment, proceedings of public meetings, responses to the call for the convention at Wheeling . . . and various other matters, admirably well calculated to keep up one’s courage in these gloomy times.³

When it became clear in April that the Virginia Convention was not going to reject secession for the Commonwealth, Campbell did more than report on what was happening elsewhere. He used his editorial space to call the citizens of Western Virginia to action and reassure them that they weren’t alone.

There was a time for argument against secession in this State, but that time has now gone by. . . . The time has now come for action—prompt, energetic, instantaneous action. . . . You must make up your minds to act for yourselves, and without loss of time. Your position, if you have but the nerve to sustain it, is one of moral sublimity. . . . The friends of the Union everywhere look to you and pray that you may have the moral courage to dare to stand up for your rights in the Union. You have the sympathy of the Union men in the two great States that join us, and all over the country. . . . We conjure you, then, as freemen who must achieve their own enfranchisement . . . forget past differences, if such there have been, and unite as one man in this hour of common danger, and act as becomes the momentous issues forced upon you.⁴

For weeks, the *Intelligencer* repeatedly assured readers in Western Virginia that they would be supported and protected by the federal government and Northern states if
needed. “We are informed that the government is prepared to distribute arms in any quantity to those willing to enroll themselves into Union organizations, and take the oath of fidelity,” the newspaper claimed. To add credibility to his statements, Campbell filled the pages with clips from other parts of the country conveying the same message, such as the New York Post’s proclamation: “If the loyal men of Virginia need arms, the government will supply them. If they need help, a hundred thousand patriots are hastening to their border. They must take courage and act.”

And a correspondent from Washington wrote: “There are several prominent New Yorkers here, who have clubbed together and raised $15,000, with which arms are to be purchased for and distributed among the people of Western Virginia, who are determined to stand by the Union.”

Nearby Pittsburgh especially was concerned that Wheeling would be attacked by Confederate troops, repeatedly warning of secessionists infiltrating the city in small groups until enough were in place to band together and overtake the government there. “The Union men of Northwestern Virginia will need effective protection. . . . If preventive measures are not taken, [there] will be a secession advance on Wheeling. . . . If Pennsylvania is to have a foreign and a hostile country at her very doors, she ought to be making arrangement accordingly.”

But privately, Campbell sought to do more than share promises clipped from other journals. He turned his pen to personal correspondence seeking help from the neighboring state of Ohio. In a letter to Governor William Dennison, Campbell requested that troops be sent to the rescue. “The sooner your state and Pa. occupies a position on
our borders the better. Secession is creeping up. I am afraid that the Union men in
Western Virginia will shortly all be slaughtered.”

Ten days later Campbell’s letter was followed with information from John Carlile, a
former Virginia legislator and U. S. Congressman who was a leading Western Virginia
Unionist, that Confederate troops were moving in the vicinity of Grafton, in Taylor
County, Virginia, about 100 miles south of Wheeling. Within two weeks of Campbell’s
letter, Major General George McClellan—whom Lincoln and the War Department had
chosen to command the forces of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Western Virginia upon
Dennison’s recommendation—received a wire from General-in-chief Winfield Scott.
“We have certain intelligence that at least two companies of Virginia troops have reached
Grafton, evidently with the purpose of overawing the friends of the Union in Western
Virginia. Can you counteract the influence of the detachment? Act promptly.”
Virginia’s citizens had voted to ratify the ordinance of secession just one day earlier.

Support expressed by the Northern press for the Western Virginian cause was
more than patriotic puffery, and military reinforcement wasn’t strictly to protect the
people of Western Virginia; both North and South saw the mountains of Western
Virginia as a strategically vital area for launching attacks into the heartland of their
opponents and as a barrier against invasion onto their own soil. The region also was
traversed by the most important route extending west of the Appalachian Mountains, the
Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The road ran from Baltimore to the Ohio River at
Wheeling. Connection at Grafton to the Northwestern Virginia Railroad, leased by the
Baltimore and Ohio, provided a route to Parkersburg, where another line continued to
Cincinnati and St. Louis. At Baltimore a line connected the B&O to Washington.
only did the railroad provide a means to shuttle supplies and troops between the western and eastern theaters of battle, both opponents also sought control of the Harper’s Ferry federal arsenal, located along the route. The road was considered so important that the United States Secretary of War Edwin Stanton notified B&O president, John W. Garrett, that if he carried troops, arms, or ammunitions of war for the conspirators, the road would be condemned under the treason act.12

The promises Campbell had shared were kept; help for Western Virginia was on the way. In early May the Intelligencer had announced that the governor of Ohio was sending troops, “moving two regiments on Wheeling, one on Parkersburg, and one on Guyandotte and Point Pleasant to protect the Union men of Western Virginia.”13 The troops from Ohio were in place and destined to join the First Virginia Regiment in action at Philippi, in Barbour County, Virginia, when McClellan received Scott’s message.

When the first local troops deployed from Wheeling on May 27 they departed on the B&O. Campbell’s fortuitous hiring of Granville Hall, who traveled with the regiment as correspondent, gave the newspaper a front-row seat to the earliest activity of the troops. “The passage of the troops who left the depot Monday morning has been one continued ovation as far as they have gone,” Hall wrote, describing for readers the triumphant departure.14

Years later, Campbell noted the deployment in his scrapbook.

“Col. Kelley commanding our WV Reg[iment] broke camp on Wheeling Island & started for Burnt Bridge & Fairmont & beyond to meet Col. Porterfield’s force who were destroying the road to prevent either a rising in Western Va against secession or an invasion from the other loyal states,” Campbell wrote next to a telegram from Colonel
Benjamin F. Kelley, commander of the Virginia regiment of Union soldiers who had camped on Wheeling Island. In the telegram, Kelley, a Wheeling resident assigned to form the First Virginia Infantry, had instructed Campbell to “make up mail for Grafton,” the town to which the troops were transported.

Kelley’s principal duty throughout the war was to guard the vital B&O line in Maryland and West Virginia, defending it from Confederate raiding parties. During the early years of the war, Wheeling also was anticipated to be a target of Confederate Virginians’ anger as division of the state played out in that city.

On June 2 the Virginia regiment, joined by Ohio and Indiana regiments, converged on Philippi, in Barbour County, where they attacked a Confederate encampment just before dawn on June 3. The ensuing brief skirmish was the first land battle of the Civil War involving organized troops. Union troops outnumbered Confederates more than threefold and the “Secessionists made good their escape” in short order, according to Hall’s dispatch for the Intelligencer on the day of the battle. “A large quantity of provision and ammunition were also secured,” Hall added. The Associated Press reported Kelley had been mortally wounded and died after the battle, however, within hours of the tussle Hall provided a second dispatch with accurate information to the Intelligencer, saying Kelley was “not so badly wounded as first supposed,” but had been “shot in the left breast” and the ball had been extracted.

While this initial military action was more a rout than a contest—the Confederate troops retreated so quickly it was known as “the Philippi Races”—it had significant strategic consequences, including ultimately depriving the Confederacy of control of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and boosting the Union soldiers’ resolve. Historians claim
the occasion was likely the world’s first employment of the railroad in converging
divergent forces—from Wheeling, Parkersburg, Indiana, and Bellaire, Ohio—upon an
enemy.20

Messages from Kelley would continue to provide instructions for Campbell to aid
the military efforts. “Retain any letters from Alonzo Loring directed to Richmond or any
other suspicious point,” Kelley’s telegram of May 31 to Postmaster Campbell read. “Do
not let your clerks know that you have so detained them. This order is positive and must
be obeyed.”21

Loring was the sheriff of Ohio County and known about Wheeling for his
community activity, including being president of the Wheeling Library Association.22
What wasn’t known broadly about Loring is that on April 29 he had been appointed by
Virginia Governor Letcher to raise troops and serve as major over the Virginia volunteers
from the counties of Tyler, Wetzel, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke, and Hancock. Since Virginia
had joined the Confederacy, the state troops supported the Confederate States of
America.23 On May 4 Loring was directed to use the forces he commanded to “give
protection to the terminus of the main road [railroad] at the Ohio River.”24

When Loring was arrested on June 5, the Intelligencer’s editors expressed
surprise and suggested perhaps the arrest was in error. Acknowledging that Loring had
recently visited Richmond and perhaps had “brought some papers . . . in which his own
name is mentioned as bearer or otherwise” to one of the captured commanders at
Philippi, the newspaper sincerely hoped “the Major’s arrest is a result of a mistake, and
that he has had no complicity whatever in the rebellious movements of the
secessionists.”25
The incident was an early example of the intermingling of secessionist and Unionist sentiments within the region. Rebecca Harding Davis, who lived in Wheeling during the early years of the war, observed that “in every village opinions clashed” with each “confident that God was on their side.”

Those whose loyalty had remained with Virginia were sometimes converted by the state’s own actions. Before the vote on the secession ordinance, the *Intelligencer* received a letter from Harper’s Ferry, where Virginia troops had been sent to control the federal armory and arsenal. The writer claimed secession was played out in that area and the people desired to be part of the new state being discussed, claiming the Confederate soldiers “would starve were it not for taking by force everything they consume and paying for it with Virginia stock, worth from forty to forty-three cents on the dollar.” The writer believed, “If fifty soldiers could be quartered upon these terms upon every district in the Commonwealth, she would vote down the secession ordinance by a large majority.”

After secession was declared, Confederate Virginians quickly learned that loyalty to the old state could no longer be taken for granted in the western counties. A correspondent to Preston County’s *Kingwood Chronicle* had predicted, in February, the reaction of eastern Virginia to the Western Virginians’ ensuing independence. “They see the West gradually slipping through their fingers and feel with alarm that hereafter they will have a ‘back seat’ while the destiny of Virginia is being controlled and worked out, by the heretofore slighted and abused semi-barbarians and alligators, as they have been pleased to call us.”
A letter from Colonel George Porterfield, the commander of the Confederate troops at Philippi, to Confederate General Richard B. Garnett, indicated the Western Virginia movement had, indeed, made an impression on the citizens of the region.

I have found great diversity of opinion and much bitterness of feeling among the people of this region. They are apparently upon the verge of civil war. A few bad men have done much mischief by stirring up rebellion among the people and representing to them the weakness of the State and its inability or indisposition to protect them, the power of the government at Washington and their willingness to give any required aid to resist the State authorities. I am too credibly informed to entertain any doubt that they have been and will be supplied with the means of resistance.28

Likely the Intelligencer’s incessant coverage demanding loyalty to the Union and encouragement from the North had influenced the “bad men” doing mischief in favor of the Union. The Intelligencer would continue to carry much news about the war for the next four years, sometimes in too much detail. Late in 1861, Kelley, who had been promoted to Brigadier General, ordered Campbell and the Intelligencer to be less forthcoming in coverage, especially about information provided via correspondence. “For mine, for the country, for God sake, don’t publish anything more about my strength. Your late article invites the rebels to cut me to pieces before I can get reinforced. Suffer nothing to be published relative to my strength or position—except what passes under your own eye.”29

Campbell may have become somewhat more careful, but didn’t completely buckle under to authority. Before the war had ended he would be arrested by Major General Franz Sigel, a German soldier who was put in command of the new Department of West Virginia in 1864, for printing “contraband information.” On April 13, Campbell was notified to “repair under guard to headquarters at Cumberland, Md., and there answer
to the charge of having published a letter” the day before from a soldier correspondent—
signed Fifteenth—that included information about his location, number of troops in that
place, and an opinion that “from present indication, it appears that something is going to
be done in the ‘Bully Little Dutchman’s’ Department.” The correspondent apparently
was using period slang to refer to Sigel, perhaps sarcastically, as the terrific little
German.

A telegram from the governor, recommending release, was sent immediately and
Sigel responded: “I have issued an order releasing from arrest A. W. Campbell but expect
him personally . . . to make satisfactory explanation it is essential that this practice of
publishing unlawful information be suppressed at any sacrifice.”

Campbell published a follow-up piece a week later, written with hints of his
normal good humor.

Gen. Sigel arrest [sic] our correspondent . . . whose letter . . . so offended him,
and had him taken under guard to his headquarters. . . . The General was so
fascinated with our intelligent and candid and patriotic writer that he immediately
relented toward him, and instead of impaling him on the point of his sword, took
him at once into his good graces and detailed him for special duty at his
headquarters. That is right. . . . And now that our correspondent is so near the
throne we trust that he will be able to give us the allowable facts as they may fall
to him fresh from the General’s lips, and thus not stray into contraband errors. . . .
The public will no more than ever be on the lookout for letters from “Fifteenth.”

Readers wanted details and Campbell’s attempt to give as many as possible
helped to make the Intelligencer the newspaper of choice for many seeking information
about the situation in Western Virginia. He relied on “a numerous and valued body of
correspondents” to provide many of those details, saying “the correspondence of a
newspaper is, or ought to be, one of its most attractive features.” Campbell specifically
invited soldiers, such as “Fifteenth,” to write. “We wish that all our enlisted soldiers in
Western Virginia will consider themselves at home in our paper. Its columns are always open to them for news, for expositions of abuses, or neglect, or any other matter that is of public interest.”

The editor believed “a great many very intelligent persons are apt to think they cannot write for a newspaper. This is all humbug.” He said, “any body [sic] who knows anything worth telling, if he knows how to write, can tell it—and that is all there is in writing for the newspapers,” then provided instructions to help with quality control of the correspondence the newspaper received.

Be sure to write only on one side of the sheet . . . this will save us much trouble. . . . When anything happens, or anything is to be said, write briefly, concise and to the point. If you deal in facts, give us simply the facts without any exaggeration or comment.—Our readers can make their own comments. If you deal in theory or argument, give us the logic and save the fancy or rhetorical touches for some other class of literature. Don’t indulge in striking passages or fine writing; they are not the style now, and occupy space that might be better filled. . . . Don’t write long letters unless you have a great deal to say, and then put on the pressure and condense as much as possible.

The pertinent information readers found in the Intelligencer satisfied their desires and they turned to the publication as a primary source of news about the statehood movement and the war. A letter about the Intelligencer, from Preston County, expressed “sincere thanks, and not only mine, but of all our Union citizens. . . . Its appearance is hailed with delight, and the arrival of the Western train from Wheeling is the signal for a gathering to the store to hear the news read from it.”

A Virginia family that had fled from secessionist territory to Indiana wrote to family friend F. H. Peirpoint, saying they did not “hear as much about the affairs of Wheeling and surrounding country” as they would have liked. “Father says he would be very much pleased if you would send him the ‘Wheeling Weekly Intelligencer.’ We do
not know the price per year and have thought the best way would be to trouble you and
then settle hereafter.”37 A resident of Loudon County requested a subscription to learn the
“true sentiments of Western Virginia . . . as we in Eastern Virginia have not a single
paper which will advocate our cause.”38 And another writer, from Monongalia County,
who said he was “anxious to no [sic] how all is going on,” asked that Peirpoint or the
editor send the Intelligencer to his address although he couldn’t pay for it until the end of
the year, if then.39

Others conveyed to Peirpoint what they had read in the Intelligencer, asking for
positions and making claims to payments due them, such as the letter from Baltimore
whose writer had “seen an article copied from the Wheeling Intelligencer . . . of the
seizure of money from one of the banks at Weston, to pay the claims for work done on
the Trans-Alleghany Lunatic Asylum.” He was writing “in regard to my claim for work
& materials furnished and delivered for the asylum, amounting to $129.60.”40

Officials watched the Intelligencer, as well, with an eye toward the influence of
public opinion in favor of the Western Virginia movement. A. I. Boreman, a Convention
delegate from Wood County, wrote Peirpoint regarding resolutions made at a statehood
meeting held there. “I may also say to you privately that I prepared the editorial headed
‘Public Opinion’ to accompany the resolutions. The new government will have no
difficulty in Wood County. Those that would oppose it, do not for fear of public opinion
which is with us almost entirely.” Boreman was concerned that lack of accuracy could be
a detriment in an attempt to maintain favorable public support. “I have seen the Wheeling
Intelligencer copying what purport to be my resolutions, yet there are some errors in
them as they appear in that paper.”41
The *Intelligencer* was decidedly biased toward the Union and Western Virginia’s independence from Virginia, and supported other papers that were the same while excoriating those that dared question either cause. When one of the delegates at the First Wheeling Convention included in his remarks that all present should “do all in their power to circulate in their counties those two excellent Union papers the *Morgantown Star* and *Grafton Virginian*, which have been so nobly and gallantly and effectively beating back and beating down the efforts of the conspirators and traitors in Western Virginia,” Campbell was quick to recognize “two or three other good papers” that should be brought to the attention of the Convention. He mentioned the Wellsburg *Herald*, the Clarksburg *Guard*, the Middlebourne *Plain Dealer*, the *Kingwood Chronicle*, the Martinsburg *American*, and the Piedmont *Independent*, stating “they are all doing a noble work, several of them against heavy odds, and they deserve the warm support and encouragement of the Union men wherever they have a dollar to spare.”42

In another article, Campbell enumerated the “organs of treason” in the region, rejoicing that such newspapers “are all dried up in Western Virginia so far as we know.”

The Wheeling *Union* died a natural death a few days ago; the editor of the Fairmont [*True* *Virginian*] was last seen with an epaulette on his shoulder on the march Southward; [Thompson] Surghnor, of the filthy Phillippi sheet [*Barbour Jeffersonian*], and ‘Captain of the Barbour forces,’ absquatulated in a hurry on Monday morning last, before breakfast; the *Parkersburg News* had been extinguished by its neighbors; the Clarksburgh [*sic*] editor was last seen in the confed [*sic*] army at Phillippi [*sic*]; the last seen of Dan Morris, he was dodging through the woods—we don’t know whether he had his Virginia *Patriot* with him or not, and the *Weston Herald* has not been heard from.43

During a period when news of secession and war was paramount in the press, leaders of the movement—including Campbell—viewed coverage of the justifications for Western Virginia’s actions as being essential to legitimizing the cause. As a result, loyal
newspapers in Western Virginia shared content freely, often reprinting articles from each other’s columns to maximize impact and add credibility by citing multiple sources for similar messages supporting the movement.

A content analysis of news coverage about the Western Virginia movement, as reported in sample extant newspapers from 1861, indicated nearly 30 percent of the coverage about the Western Virginia movement carried in newspapers in those counties that later became West Virginia was attributable to a source other than the newspaper in which it was published. Details of the study are included in Appendix A.

The *Intelligencer* also brought the perspective of the nation to its pages as often as possible to help readers understand the importance to the country of Western Virginia’s efforts to remain in the Union. In addition to correspondence, speeches provided by politicians, and reports submitted by secretaries of political meetings, the *Intelligencer* reprinted feature material attributed to thirty-four other newspapers around the country. Among those papers were thirteen publications from the counties in Western Virginia, along with nationally recognized newspapers such as the *National Intelligencer*, *Cincinnati Commercial*, *New York Herald*, *New York Times*, *New York World*, *Philadelphia Press*, *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, *Richmond Enquirer*, and *Washington Star*.

Many of the same newspapers also reported a large amount of news about the war, which at the time was primarily focused in the mountains of Western Virginia. Although combat took place in the mountains of the interior counties, Wheeling experienced its own travails of war. In *Bits of Gossip*, a book of autobiographical essays, Rebecca Harding Davis described the early months of the conflict as “a fever of preparation” in which residents of her hometown “never quite believed that there was war
until one day, a rough wooden box was sent down from the mountains” bearing the body of a young officer that had been killed. The columns of the *Intelligencer* corroborated Davis’s memory about the upcoming war, stating in April 1861 that “nothing else is talked of in the stores and shops, and private dwellings and upon the streets.—Eager people crowded about the *Intelligencer* office, and it would have taken an eight cylinder Hoe press to have supplied the demand for extras.”

At the onset, the public thought the war would be concluded quickly. The New York *Herald* said, “some give it ninety days, but we will give it six months.” But as hostilities dragged on from months into years, the realities became apparent in everyday life, as Davis described.

The town . . . was taken at once under the control of the Government and made the headquarters of the Mountain Department. . . . The histories . . . give no idea of the general wretchedness, the squalid misery, which entered into every individual life in the region given up to the war. Where the armies camped the destruction was absolute.

You had no money; you drank coffee made of roasted parsnips for breakfast, and ate only potatoes for dinner. Your nearest kinfolk and friends pass you on the street silent and scowling; if you said what you thought you were liable to be dragged to the county jail and left there for months. . . . Below all the squalor and discomfort was the agony of suspense or the certainty of death. But the parsnip coffee and the empty purse certainly did give a sting to the great overwhelming misery, like gnats tormenting a wounded man.

This presence of Federal troops in the city, the military struggle in the mountains, the constant threat of secessionists in the midst of the tenuous movement, and the general excitement of war provided a backdrop for the convention slated for Wheeling on June 11 at which delegates from the various counties were to determine the future of the region. Before the Philippi battle, Campbell had printed an ominous warning.

North Western Virginia is invaded by the troopers of Letcher, acting doubtless under the instructions of the Confederate authorities; and the liberties of a part of
our people are strangled by the presence of this soldiery, and their very safety menaced. There can be no doubt that the prime object of this move is to prevent the election of delegates and the assembling of the June Convention in this city. The force now at Grafton is intended and expected to accomplish that object.49

In the column next to his cautionary editorial Campbell printed excerpts of a letter sent from Taylor County, the location of Grafton. From a “prominent citizen” of Wheeling who was “entirely reliable,” the letter relayed that the man had seen “three troops of cavalry, numbering between three and four hundred men . . . another cavalry company, numbering one hundred and sixty men . . . six or seven companies of Infantry and Riflemen, reported to number some 500 men” and had reports of “over 1,000 men back on the road between Philippi and Stanton.” He claimed to have spoken with “one of the privates, rather an unsuspecting, innocent man” and learned that the troops expected “to be in Wheeling shortly.”50

Delegates to the Second Wheeling Convention were expected in Wheeling, too. The June convention had been called for during the May gathering of delegates at the First Wheeling Convention in anticipation of a vote in favor of secession by the citizens of eastern Virginia. Unlike the discussion and resolutions of the May convention, Campbell predicted that “something a little sterner than paper resolves will very soon be needed, if we are to obey that first law of nature, self preservation [sic]. . . . The June convention is to do this work. . . . The people of the Northwest will not be intimidated, they will not be coerced, they will not be outraged or dragooned.”51

Throughout the year there had been discussion of a division and much of the press coverage regarding the upcoming convention had focused on the purpose of the meeting being to create a separate state, often referred to as New Virginia. However, even the
leaders who favored such a division, many of them lawyers, knew there were barriers to realizing that goal. Not the least of these was acceptance by the federal government of a new state created by secession, an action the Union denied was allowed under the Constitution. That supreme document addressed the formation of new states in article four, section three.

New states may be admitted by the Congress into this union; but no new states shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state; nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states, or parts of states, without the consent of the legislatures of the states concerned as well as of the Congress.52

To achieve statehood, the character of the movement needed to be palatable to federal government officials. Creation of a copacetic image was aided by press coverage that focused on the constitutionality and expediency of the movement. More than 70 percent of the Intelligencer’s coverage about statehood in 1861 focused on the legality and political position of the movement; in other publications the rate was about 40 percent. Another topic of focus was loyalty and patriotism of West Virginians, accounting for about 25 percent of coverage, but very little focus was placed on the topic of slavery and less than 10 percent was economic in nature.53

Understanding fully the importance and implications of the federal government’s need to recognize a legal governing body within the region, Campbell attempted to reset expectations with the Intelligencer’s readers as to the probable outcomes.

The plan indicated so extensively as the proper one for the convention to pursue, is, we believe, the one that it will pursue—viz, to declare all the high offices of the Commonwealth vacated; to declare the eastern part of the state in rebellion, and the loyal portion both in law and in fact, the power of the state. It will then be necessary for the convention to fill vacant offices, and after doing so to proceed to the work of altering and amending the constitution so as to adapt it to our want and necessities, and the exigencies of the revolutionary times that are upon us.54
When the convention convened in Washington Hall on June 11, thirty-two counties were represented and eight-eight representatives seated as credentialed participants, with additional participants being seated as they arrived throughout the two weeks of sessions. Any representatives who the credentials committee determined did not represent “a large and substantial vote of his county, were denied participation in the proceedings, but were given seats on the meeting floor.” All counties of Virginia that wanted to participate had been called to send delegates; however, some counties that desired to participate—especially those in which Confederate soldiers had taken up stations—felt it was too dangerous to select and send their representatives to Wheeling.

In his opening-day editorial, Campbell acknowledged the interest in the event and again reassured readers that the power of the federal government was on their side. The amount of attributed coverage about the movement that had been featured in the Intelligencer over recent months supported his claim.

This convention has called forth an extensive interest throughout the county. For several days past, we have given articles from our exchanges to show how anxiously the loyal public of the country were looking to its action. The Government has interested itself deeply in its proposed plan of operations, and will give its deliberations all the prestige and power of recognition and active support.

On the second day, the question was raised as to what path of action the delegates should take, reorganizing the government of Virginia or creating an entirely new state and new government, and passionate debate began. Needing more room for participants and spectators, the gathering moved to the Federal Court Room on the third floor of the Custom House on day three. As one of the federal officers sharing oversight for the offices in the building, it is likely Campbell had a part in the decision to offer the Custom
House for use by the convention. Although he wasn’t a delegate, Campbell’s office as postmaster on the ground level placed him in an ideal location to observe the activity and overhear, or participate, in the daily buzz from those in attendance.

The plan Campbell had described to readers prior to the convention was broadly supported—including in the national press and by Campbell, himself—but there were delegates who were determined to pursue separate statehood immediately. On day six, Peirpoint summarized the choices and the probable significance of the decision to be made.

Two plans have been proposed for the purpose of meeting the present emergency. One is, by a division of the state. The other is, by forming a government for the whole State. If the first were practicable, under the Constitution of the United States, I do not think it would meet the present exigency. Our great, or first object is to put down rebellion and restore peace to the country . . . by pursuing the latter course, forming a government for the whole State, as fast as rebellion shall be put down in any section of the State, county elections can be held, men loyal to the government can be placed in power, who will, by the exercise of their office, restore law and order to the community. . . . The proper course, I maintain, for us to pursue is, to institute a government for the whole State of Virginia. We are the loyal people of Virginia, entitled by law to the control of its military and civic power, as soon as we can get it. We can get it in a large portion of the State at once. . . . If we can inaugurate this movement successfully, I am confident the same step will be taken in East Tennessee, West Arkansas, North Alabama, and North Mississippi.  

The next day D. D. T. Farnsworth, from Upshur County, suggested a resolution that would let the constituents “know by some expression of the convention that we were in earnest, when we said to them before we left our homes that we would go for a division of the State at the proper time. . . . It is out of their power to understand the will of the Convention as we understand it without an expression of some kind.”

Carlile—who had fervently supported separate statehood at the first convention—explained why that action was not currently practical.
So far as I know, we all agree . . . in disiring [sic] a division of the State, but . . . it can be done only by virtue of a provision of the Constitution of the U. S. . . . [which] makes it necessary for us to obtain the assent of the Legislature of the State, and where is the Legislature, recognized as such, that can give its assent? It is no longer under the protection, or entitled to the provision, of the Constitution of the United States. . . . There is no Legislature yet that acknowledges its fealty to the Constitution of the United States. Therefore, what we desire is simply an impossibility at this time. If it be our purpose to divide the State at some future time—and it is certainly is my purpose—we are taking the only course in which it can be accomplished. Once get [sic] the government which we propose to organize here acknowledged by the Federal Government as the government of Virginia, and then you have a Legislature that can constitutionally assent to this separation.⁵⁹

Saying that it was “not the proper time to make a proposition of a division of the State,” a delegate from Monongalia County, D. B. Dorsey, reminded delegates that “we have all agreed upon that matter in private conversation.”⁶⁰ It is quite conceivable that Campbell, with his legal background, his federal position, and his personal network that included many of the leading delegates, participated in some of those private conversations between sessions.

While the convention delegates agreed to proceed with a reorganization of the state government, Campbell’s Intelligencer came under fire the next day. John C. Vance, of Harrison County, opened the session of the eighth day by questioning the character of the newspaper’s reporting of the previous day’s debate, calling the report “meager and unsatisfactory.” He claimed the remarks of those in favor of the resolution proposed by Farnsworth were “partially and incorrectly reported,” while those who spoke in opposition were “reported fully and correctly. This was calculated to leave a wrong impression on the minds of those who read the printed report, and were not present in the Convention,” Vance said. “From the remarks of gentlemen as reported it would seem that the members advocating the resolution were attempting to embarrass the Convention.”
The gentleman from Upshur County “gave many very good reasons in support of his resolution, and they were not noticed at all . . . while those of others were given almost word for word.”

“If the reporter attempts to report anything here he should report it correctly or not at all,” Vance added. “This was a species of partiality which should not be exhibited by any reporter; and if this partiality was to be shown here and in this way the sooner the people know it the better. . . . I now say to the reporter, that he will either report me correctly or not at all.”61

Vance’s accusations were fully reported in the next day’s newspaper, making their way, eventually, into the official proceedings of the convention. They also were repudiated testily by Campbell in the next day’s newspaper.

Mr. Vance is probably under the impression that we are publishing an official report of the debates, under pay from the Convention. If so, we beg to undeceive him. . . . Our reports are our private enterprise, undertaken at our own suggestion, and at our own expense. We are at liberty just to publish or omit as we please, or condense or abreviate [sic] just as our space compels us. . . . We make that which is valuable and interesting take precedence over that which is not. It is simply a physical impossibility for us to publish verbatim reports, though we usually take them verbatim. We, therefore, content ourselves with such a summary as will be most interesting to the public, and afford them the best information of what transpires.62

On the ninth day F. H. Peirpoint was elected by the convention as the new governor of Virginia and on the twelfth day, June 25, the convention adjourned having set into process a plan to reorganize the government of Virginia. The Restored Government of Virginia, sometimes called the Reorganized, Reauthorized, or Provisional Government, had been accomplished and the body had “appointed officers in those positions to execute those duties where men have acted heretofore faithlessly.”63 Each
individual, before serving in an official capacity, was required to take an oath of allegiance to “support the constitution of the United States” and to “uphold and defend the Government ordained by the Convention.” Another session of the convention was set to reassemble on the first Tuesday in August.

During the tempestuous months from May to August 1861, Campbell’s situation as editor and federal officer was of tremendous benefit in allowing him to keep tabs on the War of the Rebellion, as well as to lead the war for public opinion regarding political matters in Western Virginia. His maneuvers in those wars included full engagement through his editorial opinions, and his personal action, including employing a squadron of key correspondents who assured the columns of the *Intelligencer* were filled with details about the political and military movements in the region. The results provided readers and the press with a thorough and trusted source of news and his optimistic and confident perspective was often included in the pages of other publications. Almost 30 percent of the coverage about the Western Virginia movement, in all regions of the country, was attributed to the Wheeling *Intelligencer* or bore a Wheeling dateline, clearly establishing the city as the center of the Western Virginia movement. But by printing letters and full reports from the interior counties, he made the cause one for the whole northwest and not merely Wheeling.

People on the side of the Union wanted to believe that all Western Virginians supported the Union and advocates of the movement, both inside and outside of the region, worked hard to cultivate that image. Campbell’s *Intelligencer* published nearly five hundred articles featuring the movement over the twelve months of 1861. A whopping 84 percent of those portrayed Western Virginians as being loyal Unionists and
only three articles during the entire year cast a traitorous tinge to the region’s character; all were reprinted from the Richmond newspapers and featured additional editors’ comments to point out the criticism by eastern Virginians of the fearless northwestern part of the state. In regions inside and outside of Western Virginia more than 55 percent of coverage characterized the leaders of the movement and their actions as loyal to the Union.  

Campbell’s efforts to build and maintain a favorable image of the Western Virginia movement contributed resounding support to the cause, which was reproduced and multiplied in the pages of the press across the country. When it would support his points and build his case, Campbell also reinforced his point of view by reprinting articles from other newspapers, encouraging them to reciprocate. As he had in the past, he worked his personal network, which already included several of the leaders in the Western Virginia movement and continued to expand to include others who may be of value to his causes.

Campbell and the movement still had work to do, but the fruition, in July, of the Restored State of Virginia, gave the editor an opportunity to celebrate success. In true form, Campbell lavished praise on Western Virginia’s good fortune and acknowledged credit well beyond his own contributions.

The new government starts out auspiciously if ever a government did. . . . with the whole strength of the Federal Government at its back—with a revenue ready supplied from payment already collected by the Sheriffs—with all the loyal States wishing it God speed, and with every possible circumstance in its favor.—Surely if the hand of a kind Providence is not in all this matter, then we can not [sic] safely presume that it ever intermingles in human affairs.  

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Epigraph. *Wheeling Intelligencer*, August 1, 1861, CA.
15. “Scrapbook. Telegram B. F. Kelley to A. W. Campbell,” May 30, 1861, AWC. Kelley’s telegram, sent from Mannington, read simply, “Make up mail for Grafton today.” Next to the telegram, Campbell wrote about the commander and troops breaking camp in Wheeling.
16. Tim McKinney, “Benjamin F. Kelly,” *E-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia* (Charleston, WV: West Virginia Humanities Council, December 7, 2015), http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1177. Kelley was promoted to brigadier general in June 1861. Regiments of loyal Unionists recruited in the Western Virginia region were called the 1st Virginia, 2nd Virginia, etc. After Congress admitted West Virginia as a State in 1863 the names were changed to West Virginia regiments.
17. “From Grafton—Our Troops Move On to Phillipi [sic],” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, June 3, 1861, CA.
19. Ibid.
29. “B. F. Kelley to A. W. Campbell,” November 1, 1861, AWC.
30. “From the 15th Regiment,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, April 12, 1864, CA.
34. “Enlisted Soldiers,” Wheeling Intelligencer, September 28, 1861, CA.
35. Ibid.
38. “From Loudon County,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 1, 1861, CA.
42. “Help on the Good Work,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 17, 1861, CA.
43. “The Organs of Treason,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 11, 1861, CA.
44. Linda L. Lockhart, “The Legitimization of New Virginia: How the Press Framed the Movement for West Virginia Statehood in 1861” (Annual Conference of American Journalism Historians Association, Raleigh, SC, October 11, 2012). The parameters of the content analysis in this paper were applied to the study of Western Virginia newspapers, selecting those newspapers for which two or more extant copies were available. Of twenty newspapers that met the criteria, fourteen included content matching the search parameters: Charleston Kanawha Valley Star, Charles Town Spirit of Jefferson, Charles Town Virginia Free Press, Clarksburg Daily Union, Fairmont True Virginian, Kingwood Chronicle, Lewisburg Chronicle, Martinsburg Virginia Republican, Middlebourne Virginia Plain Dealer, Wellsburg Herald, Weston Herald, Wheeling Daily Press, Wheeling Intelligencer. In addition to the publications included in the study, six newspapers were reviewed but did not include content meeting the search parameters and only one extant copy was available for eight other publications. See Appendix A: Content Analysis Information for more information about the study parameters and findings.
45. Davis, Bits of Gossip, 119.
46. “The War News. Excitement in the City,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 15, 1861, CA. Campbell refers to a rotary printing press invented by Richard Hoe. Instead of a flatbed press, the type was placed on a revolving cylinder; the press was referred to as a lightning press because it could produce up to 8,000 sheets printed on one side per hour.
47. “How Long Is This War to Last?,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 27, 1861, CA.
50. “Important from Grafton.,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 27, 1861, CA.
51. “The Address of the Central Committee.”
57. “Virginia Convention Sixth Day,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 18, 1861, CA.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. “Virginia Convention Eighth Day,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 20, 1861, CA.
63. “Virginia Convention Twelfth Day,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, June 26, 1861, CA. This document will use the term Restored Government to reflect the language Campbell used in letters in reference to the Virginia government in Wheeling.


Chapter 6: 1861—The Cause

In the life of every man there are opportunities of success which seem slight at the time, but which if slighted never return.
—Wheeling Intelligencer

The Restored Government of Virginia was sanctioned by action of the Second Wheeling Convention in June 1861, but required recognition from the federal government to officially represent Virginia in the halls of Congress. The new government elected Senators John Carlile and Waitman Willey to replace the eastern Virginians, R. M. T. Hunter and James M. Mason, respectively, who had vacated their Senate seats by secession. Archibald Campbell approved of choosing Carlile, who had been a leader in the movement that led to the Restored Government. “Concerning Mr. Carlile’s election, every reader knows our opinion,” he wrote. “It was, in our judgment, an honor well bestowed.”

Concerning Willey’s selection, he was a little less enthusiastic. “We can only say that we would have preferred either of the other candidates. . . . Mr. Willey is not, never was, nor never will be a leader. He has not the back bone for times like these, as the records of the Richmond Convention, both in secret and public session will amply attest,” Campbell said of Willey, who had been more conciliatory at the Richmond Convention, while Carlile had given fiery speeches decrying the past oppression of Western Virginia.1 Campbell would later change his opinion of the two men based on their service in the Senate. Regardless of who had been chosen, he saw the Senate election as the next step toward creating a new state.
“These two elections yesterday will settle to the world the validity and standing of our State government. Up to this time it has only been recognized by the administration, but now it will be recognized by congress, and this will put us in formal possession of all the attributes of sovereignty that ever attached to the late government at Richmond,” he wrote.  

Despite the optimistic tone of Campbell’s editorials, he knew the process of statehood presented a labyrinth to be navigated. The omnipresent war was an agitation that drained energy and coffers, but also provided opportunity and was an impetus to forge ahead with division of the state. Ultimately, the national environment occasioned by war would be the deciding factor in realizing success for the Western Virginians. While Campbell’s editorial contributions to the cause would continue to influence public opinion in favor of the statehood movement, his personal actions became increasingly important to the existence and livelihood of the region and his stature grew in proportion.

The first twist in the statehood course was presented by the United States Senate when the credentials for Carlile and Willey, provided by Virginia Governor F. H. Peirpoint, were read to the legislative body on July 13. Objections were raised to immediately seating the two as senators and a motion was made to refer the credentials to the Committee on the Judiciary for an opinion on the legitimacy of the Restored Government which claimed to represent Virginia. The debate led to questions of the constitutionality of recognizing such a government while another Virginia government also existed in Richmond. Senator Jacob Collamer, of Vermont, claimed President Lincoln’s address to Congress earlier that month had verified the Restored Government to be legitimate.
“Must we not be governed by the fact that the government of Virginia that has executed these papers, and sent them to us, is recognized by our Executive?” Collamer asked.\(^3\) Lincoln had told the Senate and House of Representatives in his speech on July 4 that “the course taken in Virginia was the most remarkable,” explaining that “the people of Virginia . . . allowed this giant insurrection to make its nest within her borders; and . . . the loyal citizens have, in due form, claimed its [federal government’s] protection. Those loyal citizens this government is bound to recognize, and protect, as being Virginia.”\(^4\)

Kentucky Senator Lazarus Powell retorted to Collamer’s query, “I have witnessed the action of the Executive, and . . . it does not seem to me that the Constitution is much regarded.”\(^5\)

However, after the motion to refer had been “discussed at considerable length,” members of the Senate agreed, thirty-five to five, that it should be voted down and the two Virginians should take their official seats immediately. A few weeks later, Carlile reminded Virginia Convention delegates, who assembled in Wheeling on August 6 for the second session of the convention adjourned in June, that the Senate’s action validated the Restored Government. “This Legislature . . . is recognized as the Legislature . . . that thing is fully, clearly decided by the Supreme Court. . . . The decision says that the admission of representatives in Congress upon the floor of the Senate binds every other department of the Government,” he explained. That action “settles the question as to what is and who is the government of the State.”\(^6\)

With Senate acceptance, the Restored Government had successfully navigated the first passage of the maze and was irrevocably recognized as the government of Virginia. The state offices were located in Wheeling’s Custom House, instead of in Richmond, and
the district court room where the convention had instigated the reorganization was used for meetings of the legislature. Thomas Hornbrook, collector of customs and overseer of the federal facility, wrote to Salmon Chase, secretary of the treasury, in July to report that “by general consent of the Union men of Our City, County, and of loyal men of Western Virginia, friendly possession has been taken of the Second & Third stories of the Custom house Building in this City . . . for the use of the N.W. Va Convention, and Legislature and Senate of Va . . . to gether [sic] with the different departments of the Commonwealth.” Hornbrook added that “the Office rooms, the U. S. Court room & other rooms are all taken care of and kept clean at their expense. . . . Mr. A. W. Campbell P.M. takes care of his apartment in the P.O. first floor.”

This use of the federal facility in Virginia was an affront to the government in Richmond. When the state convention had voted for secession in April, Governor Letcher ordered Virginia to take control of all federal facilities in the state, by military force if necessary, including the Harper’s Ferry arsenal and the port at Norfolk. Letcher wrote to Mayor of Wheeling Andrew Sweeney, to “take possession of the Custom House, Post Office, all public buildings and public documents in the name of Virginia. Virginia has seceded.” Sweeney replied, “I have taken possession of the Custom House, Post Office, and all public buildings and public documents, in the name of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, whose property they are.”

According to the Intelligencer, when information was received in Wheeling of the governor’s order, the news “soon spread like wild fire through the city. In less than an hour hundreds of people congregated about the Custom House to tender their services for its defence [sic], and the utmost excitement prevailed.” When city officials took
necessary precautions for the defense of the property “the sensation cooled down and the people quietly dispersed.”

The Custom House soon became a bustling place. In addition to housing the federal offices it was built for—post office, custom surveyor’s and inspectors’ offices, and the federal district court—the building had taken on new purpose as a result of the upheaval in Virginia.

Campbell called the building a “grand center of attraction. It is not only a Custom House, a State House and a Post Office, but also an Arsenal.” Early in July, two thousand guns arrived, a donation from the State of Massachusetts to “be used according to the judgment of the new Government of Virginia.” Later in the month, fifty more rifles were added, which had “been taken from the secessionists of Marshall county [sic] . . . by order of the Sheriff of the county, who sent men around for the purpose.” Campbell said the “guns are well taken care of and are marked with the names of those from whom they were taken and will, no doubt, be safely returned when the proper time comes.” The facility also received uniforms for the soldiers in 1862, when it was announced that samples for 4,500 uniform coats ordered by Peirpoint could be seen in Hornbrook’s office.

The Custom House held other materials to equip the soldiers. In addition to arms, at times there was a “large amount of ammunition and explosive matter” stored in the building, according to Campbell. The three officers of the building—Campbell, Hornbrook, and Peirpoint—were called into federal court in December to answer to a claim that gunpowder was being stored in the building. The implication made by the district attorney, and by testimony of local citizens, was to the effect that Hornbrook was
profiteering by dishonestly denying permits to other gunpowder suppliers who had
previously sold the substance—permits Peirpoint approved and Hornbrook issued as
collector of customs—then bought the powder himself and sold it to others for gain,
conducting those transactions from the Custom House.

Hornbrook admitted to buying powder while “acting as State Armorer” and that
he “had distributed arms and ammunition to the United States volunteers.” He also told
the court that “he had received and stored the ammunition upon the written order of Gen.
Rosecrans,” a Union general leading troops in Western Virginia, a written copy of which
he provided to the court.

The decision to store arms and ammunition in the facility came in the earliest days
of reorganization of the state government when there was uncertainty and fear about who
was and wasn’t loyal to the Union. Peirpoint told the court that “there was a good deal of
alarm when the state was first organized. It was considered advisable that the executive
should take charge of the powder in the city, of which there was a great deal, that it might
not fall into evil hands.” The governor explained that prior to such management “every
merchant was at liberty to sell it to whom he pleased.” When the court questioned his
authority to take such control, he said that he had “the safety of the people at heart in
taking charge of the powder.”

The governor stated that “Hornbrook had been instructed to take charge of the
State powder, and occasionally small quantities had been brought into the [custom] house
. . . that whatever Mr. Hornbrook had done he (the Governor) was responsible for. Mr.
Hornbrook had not sold a single keg of powder with the cognisance [sic] of the
Governor.”
Campbell told the court he regarded the explosive material to be dangerous, and said it was “likely to explode either spontaneously or by ignition.” He had seen “kegs of powder carried into the house,” and “it was the common report and acknowledgment around the building that there was powder in the building . . . enough powder . . . to blow the building up,” he said. But Campbell, having been told that Rosecrans had ordered the storage of ammunition, claimed Hornbrook was a very prudent and careful man, implying that he followed orders as he should.

Rosecrans, when called before the court, said the powder barrel and kegs should not be kept in the Custom House and he had only consented to have “fixed ammunition” stored there. In storing ammunition, “there was no more danger than there would be in an equal quantity of dry goods,” he said and “it would be my desire at present to have the cartridges remain where they are.” In the end, the court issued an order that any keg powder be removed from the building but left determination of what should be done with the ammunition to the general and governor. Nothing more was mentioned in court in regard to profiteering.

Something else of great value was stored in the Custom House: gold. The surveyor’s office contained a vault, which was appropriated to serve the military paymasters’ needs. In July, the Intelligencer printed that “a quarter of a million dollars in gold went out the railroad on Wednesday morning, in charge of a Government Paymaster.” Likely the gold had been stored in the safe until it was ready to disburse. In a letter to Treasury Secretary Chase regarding the lock on the vault, a special agent acknowledged the large sums of money stored there, saying he knew “that there were at the time some two millions of dollars in the vault belonging to the different Paymasters in
the Army.”21 The First Virginia Regiment mustered out at Camp Carlile—on Wheeling Island—in August after their three-month voluntary service was complete. “After being inspected . . . the whole regiment marched over to the city and deposited their arms in the Custom House, and returned . . . to await the movement of the Paymaster.”22 The soldiers were to be paid off with contents from the vault.

With such valuable contents, the building was a target. In 1862 an attempt was made to rob the vault of “one million, two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.” The Intelligencer described the vault as “built of bricks, cement and iron . . . about fourteen inches thick and between every layer of bricks there is also a layer of crossed and riveted iron firmly imbedded in the cement.” The story said the burglars, despite being armed with tools, “could not open the heavy iron door of the vault so they set to work with crow-bar and chisel to dig a hole through the only exposed side. They succeeded in digging out the bricks and making a large aperture in the wall, but the iron still remained and could not be removed. . . . They could see and feel the money, but could not get at it.”23

Fearing such an attempt, or worse an armed attack, in July 1861 Peirpoint had requested “an armed guard of soldier [sic] of from 10 to 15 men . . . on duty every night,” Hornbrook reported to Chase.24 The guards failed to detect the burglars, finding evidence of the attempt only after they were gone.

The activities at the Custom House in 1861 constituted a heady day-to-day environment in which Campbell thrived, as he, Peirpoint, and Hornbrook ran the facility. He appreciated that the building was home to the new government he supported, believing it fortuitously perfect for the purpose:
The building of the United States Custom House, in this city, was a fortunate thing for the new Government inaugurated . . . by the Convention. It is nothing more or less than a fine State House a good deal finer than the one tenanted by the traitors at Richmond. The magnificent United States Court Room is just the hall for the Convention and . . . just the place for the legislature. . . . The different committee rooms, Governor's room &c., seem almost to have been made to order. We never could see before what all these fine rooms were set apart for. Now we know, and we begin to draw upon our ancient Calvinistic ideas, and see foreordination all around us.25

When the Wheeling Convention delegates returned to the Custom House on August 6 to reconvene the Second Wheeling Convention, as had been scheduled at the June session, Campbell predicted “that the Convention will not remain in session long, but will do their business with dispatch.” He expected “the subject of a division of the State will be discussed and will probably occupy most of the time.”26

His forecast was correct. The first order of business acknowledged that “a large majority of the good and loyal citizens of Western Virginia are in favor of a division of the State, yet there seems to exist a difference of opinion as to the proper time, as well as the proper means to be used.”27 In order to facilitate action, a committee was appointed to bring forward to the convention a realistic plan for division. Campbell didn’t venture to suggest what the committee should propose, but stressed urgency for progress toward a division.

No one has a clearly defined conception of what the proper steps would be, or how to begin them. But undoubtedly the people are right in supposing that this Convention is the body, and . . . the golden opportunity for us to commence moving is now. . . . If we wait until peace and order and quiet are restored we will wait fatally. . . . It will not do to wait until the noose is again thrown around us—until we find that we are bound hand and foot by the restoration of the old slavocratic regime. . . . What we want then and what the people expect is, that this Convention should open the way of escape.28
Within fourteen days a proposal had been accepted by the group, with a vote of fifty to twenty-eight, for a new state to be named Kanawha. The convention delegates had debated the boundaries and determined that thirty-nine counties would be included with seven others possible, if the majority of voters in those counties approved on the October 24 date set for a vote by citizens of all counties.

Campbell greeted the news with his usual optimism. “If we are not greatly mistaken in the temper of the people, and in what will be the expression of it in the election to be held, we shall all be citizens of the State of Kanawha before many months roll round. Speed the day that is to sever us from our political connection with Eastern Virginia!”

Confident of the citizens’ vote being favorable for the division, Campbell was less certain that the federal government would accept the new state. Therefore, his editorials often focused on succinctly countering what he saw as the government’s primary challenge to the acceptance, the constitutionality of dividing an existing state to create a new one.

There is neither distraction, or revolution, or broken faith in the action of the convention. Revolution implies violence, illegality; or, if you please, unconstitutionality. There is nothing of the kind in the action of the Convention. They have taken their steps legally and in order, just as it is provided by the Constitution of the United States. . . . The question is all open from beginning to end. It is first to be submitted to the people—it is next to be submitted to the legislature and next to Congress.

But Campbell knew there were other objections within the proposed borders of the state. During the nine weeks between the convention’s decision and the election, the Intelligencer strove to influence Western Virginia citizens’ opinion in favor, not only of division—he believed that was a shared desire—but of a united effort. “It would take a
long time for us to go through the list of excuses . . . that were urged, and could be
plausibly urged, against a division,” he told readers.31 Knowing slight differences of
opinion existed as to how and when a division should be accomplished, he used his pen
carefully, often expressing theoretical agreement with dissenters’ opinions while stressing
the practical flaws in their arguments. For example, a Jackson County citizen wrote to
Peirpoint: “I deeply regret the cause pursued by the convention in relation to the division
of the state . . . it will take considerable effort to carry this county for the division.” The
writer was not opposed to the division, only to the timing. He hoped the “matter would be
permitted to rest for a while. . . . The people [are] not ready for the question.”32

Campbell acknowledged there was “division of sentiment as to the expediency of
having acted now . . . that is a very different thing from discord,” but he felt time was of
the essence if Western Virginians ever wanted to achieve division.

If we have felt even reasonably sure that ever such another opportunity would
have occurred for accomplishing what we have all so long hoped and desired to
accomplish, we should have felt inclined to side with the friends of postponement.
. . . But we have lived long enough to know that imagination is one thing and
realization another, and that there is nothing certain beyond a present
opportunity.33

Three days before the election, in a final pitch for support, Campbell again
addressed the several concerns that had been expressed, including that Congress might
refuse admission, even if the people voted favorably. “This is the grand argument of the
opponents,” Campbell said, “the great bugaboo with which they try to frighten us from
the prosecution of our object. . . . How would we be worse off than we now are? But this
failure is only possible, not probable. . . . Many a lion in the way, seen at a distance or in
an uncertain light, turns out when boldly approached to be a stump or a stone.”34
In the final issue of the *Intelligencer* that would reach readers before the election, Campbell addressed the voters. “We want to appeal to them once for all to be alive to the magnitude of the question presented to them for decision. . . . See that every poll is opened . . . and that all necessary formalities are observed. Take your rifles with you to the polls if it is not safe without.”

In October 1861, although turnout was low, the voters of the Western Virginia counties overwhelmingly expressed their support for the creation of a new state with 18,408 voting in favor of the new state and 781 opposed. During the election, voters also had chosen delegates to a constitutional convention, scheduled to convene on November 26 if the division ordinance passed. The convention met from November 1861 until February 1862, hammering out the structure of the new state. One of the topics that had to be resolved was the name of the state. Although the voters had approved the creation of a state to be called Kanawha, many delegates were opposed to that name.

From the time the name Kanawha had been agreed upon, in August, Campbell had been unconvinced it was the best choice. Some people complained the name would cause confusion because there were already two rivers and a county by the same name, which is likely why it was chosen, but Campbell had his own reasons for preferring an alternative.

Kanawha “is a hard jaw-breaking word of harsh sound and hard to spell,” an *Intelligencer* article said. “It is a name suggested of nothing but its Indian origin. . . . It signifies, as some say, ‘the bloody land’—a name given it no doubt, to commemorate the sanguinary strife between contending tribes.” In hindsight, it would have been a fitting name for the battlegrounds of Western Virginia during the Civil War.
Instead, the name Western Virginia was preferred, as the section of the state had “long been known as Western Virginia, and we think this title would sufficiently distinguish our new State from the old.” Although he had been born in Ohio, Campbell had long ago adopted Virginia as his home. “We were born on Virginia soil, and our attachment for the name and soil are strong, and since it is they, and not we, who have changed government, let us keep the good old name of Western Virginia. If they do not choose to be identified by the same name, let them find another.”

Delegates finally agreed upon the name West Virginia in place of Kanawha and determined the boundaries of the new state would contain forty-four counties and seven additional counties would be added if their voters approved. An issue that was more divisive was whether the new state should be a free or slave state. The institution of slavery had not been the main bone of contention between east and west; the taxation and representation based on slave property had. Calls for immediate or gradual emancipation were unsupported by the delegates and the final constitution stated only that “no slave shall be brought, or free person of color be permitted to come into this State for permanent residence.”

The new constitution was overwhelmingly approved by the voters in April 1862: 18,862 in favor and 514 opposed. The proposed state of West Virginia was ready to face the federal government’s scrutiny before Congress.

And the war continued. By early 1862 the hope for a quick solution had faded and the enthusiasm for war as a principled battle to be fought for honor had waned. Rebecca Harding Davis remembered that “a large number of men in both armies did not, as we imagine now, volunteer in a glow of patriotic zeal for an idea—to save either the Union
or the Confederacy—to free the negro or to defend state’s rights. . . . They went into the army simply to earn a living.” The war, she said, “was the sole business of the nation. With many laboring men the only choice was to enlist or starve.”

But a soldier’s meager pay didn’t stretch far. Privates in 1861 were paid twenty dollars per month—only part of which was paid in cash, the remainder being made up in rations and supplies—but they were entitled to land warrants of 160 acres each in return for their service. As a soldier gained rank his rate of pay increased; a corporal earned twenty-two dollars per month and a captain $118.50, all with the same stipulations regarding rations and other supplies.

Prices for basic needs in Western Virginia, such as food and housing, were very high, if such needs were available at all. A Wheeling woman writing to her husband, a soldier in the Union Army, told him she was “very fortunate to get that little house. You cannot get a house in Wheeling for love nor money. Em has not got a house yet nor can not [sic] get even a room to rent.” If a house could be found, the rent was likely to be $200 or $300 per year.

She explained that “the town is full of soldiers now. The first Va stays in the Market house the[y] cook out in the street. Marketing has got very high since the soldiers came. Butter is forty cents a pound, pork is fifteen cents a pound and everything else in proportion.” Other articles indispensable to most households were nearly beyond means. Flour sold for sixteen dollars a barrel, tea for two dollars per pound, muslin for sixty cents per yard. As the war continued, the hardship grew worse, as evidenced by the wife’s letter to her husband in 1864: “I don’t know [how] people is to live if this
continues so high. I have to pay two dollars and forty cents for a load of coal. I have quit thinking about dry goods, the[y] are out of the question.”

For Campbell, however, the war was proving to be quite beneficial. In addition to placing him in a position of considerable power at the center of action in the Custom House, his business was booming, and his levelheaded conduct and shared work location had helped to establish a close relationship between himself and Governor Peirpoint, which led to a lifelong friendship. Campbell strengthened and expanded his network among other prominent politicians, as well, and had several acquaintances in the U.S. Congress. He had earned the respect of and had influence, especially, with the Republican majority.

Although the challenge of forming a government in Western Virginia was invigorating, the reality of the region’s ongoing insecurity was a pressing matter, especially so in the early months of the war. The Restored Government didn’t have access to Virginia’s existing funds, as those were held at Richmond, and no federal funds due the state of Virginia had been disbursed. When the Restored Government legislature first met, Peirpoint and P.G.Van Winkle, another of the statehood activists and a Wood County representative to the legislature, used their personal endorsement to raise $10,000 for expenses of the members.

There were no state militia supplies in Western Virginia, either. The Restored Government had “no jurisdiction farther than the bayonets of the United States extended” and was mostly at the mercy of others to provide for its protection. Even in areas where the region could supply men to fight for the Union, they were often without weapons to do so. The federal government had promised aid for the vulnerable region, but delivery
was slow. In August 1861 Carlile telegraphed Lincoln with a report of several thousand Confederate troops near Huttonsville, in Randolph County, and a request that conveyed the region’s vulnerability. While there were 175 miles between the troops and Wheeling, the location was only eighty-five miles from Carlile’s home in Fairmont, which was reflected in the urgency of his request. “For God’s sake send us more troops & a general to command or else we are whipped out in less than ten days.”

Less than a month later, Peirpoint wrote to the president that the home guard men of West Virginia could not defend themselves because of lack of arms. The governor conveyed his hopes that “this section of the service will not be entirely overlooked. At the breaking out of the revolution, Western Va was destitute of state arms—and of arms of any kind.” He explained that promises made to him had not been kept.

“I have not received one gun from the Federal government . . . except a few captured by Gens McClelland [sic] and Cox. . . . I was promised 5000 muskets in July from the war department none of which have come to hand.”

Peirpoint had also sent emissaries, one of whom was Campbell, to conduct business face to face in New York and Washington in search of financing for the Restored Government’s war efforts. Campbell’s companion, Daniel Lamb, a delegate to the Second Wheeling Convention, wrote to Peirpoint that he and Campbell had “addressed a memorial to the President, asking on behalf of the Reorganized government of Va. Pecuniary aid to the amount of $300,000 from the United States, for [unreadable] equipping & moving troops to be employed in State Service.” They had met with the President, where “he expressed himself very favorably disposed, regarding our case,” considering it to be the same as others in Tennessee and Missouri that had been granted.
The president endorsed the memorial “expressing his own favorable sentiments” and sent it with the men to call upon the secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Chase. “He assured us our wants should be supplied,” Lamb wrote. “From our interviews with the President & Secy of Treasury, we feel great confidence that the assistance required will be attained from Washington, without the necessity of resorting to a loan.”

Peirpoint sent Campbell on another mission in spring 1862, likely in cahoots with the editor. Campbell went to Washington with a letter from Peirpoint to Lincoln that said their “mutual friend A. W. Campbell will hand you this note—I have advised him to accompany Gen McClelland [sic] into Richmond and take possession of one of the rebel printing presses in that city.” Union Major General George McClellan’s forces had begun a slow, deliberate offensive on Richmond in April and by end of May were nearing that target. Peirpoint requested the president give Campbell a “passport to Gen McClelland’s [sic] headquarters with full authority to act in the premises.”

The plan was for Campbell to acquire a new press for the cause. “I am satisfied that a printing press used in advocating rebellion is a species of property which is liable to be appropriated by the commanding Gen who captures it,” Peirpoint explained. “It may be handed over to the quarter master and sold or placed gratuitously into the hands of a discreet man to be used on the enemy in restoring peace.”

Contending that the “commanding Gen[eral] ought to be the judge” of the value of the property, Peirpoint suggested McClellan could “place it in the hands of parties that he is satisfied will use it discreetly and effectively has full power to do so without compensation.” To assure it was clear that he meant Campbell should have the press,
Peirpoint closed his letter with assurance to the president that knowing Campbell’s “devotion and earnestness in the cause, he will work effectively.”

McClellan’s army did not reach Richmond as planned, being driven back from the Confederate capital by General Robert E. Lee in June. Neither did Campbell gain the Richmond press for his growing business enterprise, but the Intelligencer’s circulation continued to grow, despite difficult times for the newspaper business, in general.

While the Intelligencer had “a circulation more than double its circulation in ordinary times,” it was not immune from the industry’s business distress. “People think that these are money making times for the newspapers. But it is not so,” the editors told readers. As evidence, the Intelligencer included a clipping from the New York Tribune.

The circulation of American dailies is this year larger than ever before, yet a great many have recently been discontinued because their patronage was inadequate to meet their current expenses. We doubt that a single daily in the city has paid its current expenses throughout the last four months, or that a dozen in the Union have done so. Dailies live by their advertising, and this inevitably falls off in times of business stagnation or depression. No amount of mere circulation will support a journal.

The Intelligencer’s editors encouraged advertisers and buyers to turn to their publication for effective business promotion. “People make the grand mistake of assuming in times like these that nobody has any money. No mistake could be greater.—Money can be had for almost anything a man has to sell, by extensively advertising it.” The Intelligencer claimed its “advertisements are all conspicuous. We believe now is the time to advertise.” But the editors warned it was “useless for parties to send or leave advertisements or notices at our office, with request, verbal or written to charge them. We will not do it. We have lost pretty much all we have earned for the last five years that way, and we have stopped it.”
Another source of income for Campbell and McDermot was job printing of letterhead, circulars, announcements, invitations, and such, but, despite his connections, Campbell was rejected by the Restored Government legislature when it chose a public printer for the state. The firms of Campbell and McDermot and Trowbridge and Downey, printers of the *Intelligencer’s* competitor the Wheeling *Press*, were nominated. However, an objection from the House chairman resulted in a reconsideration of the nomination, “as the resolution required the election of a ‘Printer’ and not printers.”62 In the re-nomination process, Campbell was nominated, as was Mr. Trowbridge. Legislator George Porter, of Hancock County, said his vote would have been for Campbell and McDermot, as a firm, but since “Mr. Campbell held a position now under the Government, he was ineligible to the office of Public Printer, under a provision of the Constitution.” The combined vote of the House and Senate awarded the position to Trowbridge with thirty-three votes against only four votes for Campbell.63

However, business was evidently not too bad for Campbell and McDermot. In May 1861 they advertised in their pages for additional help, looking for “a good boy, who has had some experience at the printing business.”64 By December of that year they had a new press to help keep up with the volume of demand, apologizing to readers for delays in delivery of the newspaper while the press was being fully installed.

For two weeks past we have not been able to get the whole of our large edition off in time for the mails. This is owing to the fact that our old steam press wants the capacity to work off the present edition of the paper. It answered very well in former years when the paper was in its infancy; but it cannot longer do the work which it has done so well and for such a long period. We have consequently procured a larger and much more rapid press, and like all new presses it does not operate as well as it will when it gets used to the work it has to do.65
The circulation growth was not unique to the Wheeling press. During 1861, people in all parts of the country clamored for news about the unprecedented events in the nation: secession, war, government actions. The Western Virginia movement was in the national news spotlight during the first half of the year as all sections awaited a final verdict on whether that region would remain loyal to the Union or follow the path of secession in accord with the mother state of Virginia. By the end of 1861, Western Virginians having made a declaration of independence to determine their own fate and having undertaken a controversial reorganization of the Virginia government, the movement faded from the national news spotlight, especially in the northern states. It was replaced largely by other matters of national importance, many of which were war related. The total amount of Western Virginia government coverage in the final five months of the year did not equal the amount in either of the peak months of May or June. Peak quantity of coverage in Western Virginia newspapers had been provided in the months of April and May, but diminishing coverage in the final four months of the year followed the national trend. However, during those final months national coverage of the movement shifted perspective, more often focusing on the long-term effects of the actions in Western Virginia, while regional coverage continued to focus primarily on the events as they were taking place and the immediate consequences of those events. (For more information about coverage trends, see Appendix A: Content Analysis Information.)

The year 1861 was eventful and dramatic. Although Campbell wasn’t a politician and didn’t serve as a delegate or legislator, he was right at the center of the action in the Western Virginia movement. He wielded his power as a federal officer and a director
within the Custom House to coordinate and accelerate activity beneficial to the movement and the region. Always a networker, Campbell established a special working relationship with Peirpont, becoming a close advisor and assistant in communications with the federal government and supporters of the region. He lent the full support of his press and the *Intelligencer* became an ambassador for the movement. He used his gift for writing and the newspaper’s increasing circulation to inform, educate, debate, and encourage the citizens of the region and nation about the topics that were pertinent to attaining the goal of independence from the Richmond government—and eventually statehood. He also stressed the legality of the movement, via the press and personal network, to federal officials to preemptively counter concerns about accepting the new government as legitimate and constitutionally viable. Many years later Peirpoint would ask Campbell, “What would I have done without the *Intelligencer* in those days? I felt then and feel now that it was the right arm of our movement.”

The new state of West Virginia, approved by the citizens of the region and the Restored Government of Virginia, had one more hurdle to clear: approval by Congress and Lincoln. Campbell had one more important deed to carry out to assure that success.

Notes

Epigraph. *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 12, 1861, CA.
2. Ibid.
9. “Rumor About the Custom House.,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 20, 1861, CA.


19. Ibid.


23. “A Daring Attempt to Rob the Government Safe at the Custom House--Burglars Foiled.,” Wheeling Intelligencer, September 9, 1862, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress. Campbell had access to the vault at some point during his tenure in the Custom House. He scrawled his name on the inside of the vault door, where it remains visible to visitors of Independence Hall.

24. “Thomas Hornbrook to Salmon P. Chase.”

25. “The New Government of Our State,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 24, 1861, CA. The Custom House is now a museum operated by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. It was restored to its 1860 appearance and has been fittingly renamed West Virginia Independence Hall. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. A bust of A. W. Campbell is displayed in the corner of the building where his postmaster’s office was situated. For more information see http://www.wvculture.org/museum/WVIHmod.html


30. “The New State--The Vote of October Next.,” Wheeling Intelligencer, August 26, 1861, CA.

31. Ibid.

32. “A. Flesher to F. H. Peirpoint,” August 30, 1861, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers (1814-1899), WVRHC.


34. “Shall We Have a New State?,” Wheeling Intelligencer, October 21, 1861, CA.

35. Ibid.


40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
43. “Soldiers’ Pay,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, May 10, 1861, CA.
47. Wilde, *History of Wheeling During the Past Forty Years*, 59.
49. “A.W. Campbell (father) to A.W. Campbell (son),” December 16, 1861, AWC. The connection between Peirpoint and Campbell was perceived as a close one by Campbell’s family, with them believing Campbell had influence on the governor. Campbell’s own father wrote to ask him, on behalf of a close acquaintance, to “intercede . . . with the Governor” regarding a job for the stone mason to finish the work to build the West Insane Asylum. The gentleman, Robert Hosie, had been the “principal mechanic in the stone work of our College edifice,” his father told Campbell and expressed that he trusted Campbell would “succeed in attaining for him the job.”
52. Wilde, *History of Wheeling during the Past Forty Years*, 54.
53. “Telegram: J. S. Carlile to A. Lincoln,” August 15, 1861, ALP.
54. “F. H. Peirpoint to A. Lincoln,” September 12, 1861, ALP.
55. “D. Lamb to F. H. Peirpoint,” September 19, 1861, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers (1814-1899), WVRHC.
57. Ibid.
58. “Newspapers.,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 3, 1861, CA.
59. Ibid.
61. “Please Take Notice,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, May 10, 1861, CA.
63. Ibid.
64. “A Situation,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, May 17, 1861, CA.
Chapter 7: 1861-1862—A New State!

We ask Congress, then to give us a new State . . . because the West can never go back to Richmond, and submit to a tyranny intensified in a ten-fold degree by the very efforts we have made to free ourselves from its oppression.
—Wheeling Intelligencer

“The telegraph yesterday morning apprized us that Mr. Willey in the United States Senate had presented to that body an official copy of the constitution of the New State, accompanied by the memorial of the Legislature asking Congress to consent to a division of the State of Virginia,” the Intelligencer of May 30, 1862 announced.¹

During the running of this final gauntlet to reach federal approval for statehood, Senator Waitmen Willey, whom A.W. Campbell had once referred to as having “not the back bone for times like these,” would redeem himself and Senator John Carlile, one of the statehood movement’s strongest supporters, would fall from grace for his betrayal during Senate proceedings. Through the columns of the Intelligencer Campbell assured readers were informed of the progress of the bills for statehood and, in response to Carlile’s actions, decimated the senator’s reputation among the Western Virginians who had trusted him. Over the seven months required to complete the federal approval process, Campbell was at the locus of the movement, applying his wealth of talents toward a successful conclusion of the statehood movement, his obsession of the past two years. After that prize was won he would expend his energies on other, more personal, interests, but throughout 1862 West Virginia’s fate was uncertain and the effort needed his full attention.

In May, upon Willey’s introduction of the documentation to the U.S. Senate, the request for statehood was referred to the Committee on Territories, chaired by Senator
Benjamin F. Wade, of Ohio. After favorable review by the committee, drafting of the statehood bill was entrusted to Carlile, who was a member of the group. The chore took nearly a month to complete, but on June 23, Wade reported Senate Bill 365, providing for the admission of the State of West Virginia. When the contents were revealed, West Virginians, including Willey, were dismayed. The process they had followed so carefully—the Wheeling Convention, the Restored Government’s legislative approval, and the Constitutional Convention which laid out the state boundaries—were for naught if Carlile’s bill passed.

The bill added twelve additional counties beyond those addressed in the Constitution, expanding the boundaries to include counties to the east of the natural mountain barrier that separated eastern and Western Virginia. These counties had not been represented in the convention that formed the Constitution, nor had they participated in the vote of citizens who had approved that document; therefore those steps would need be repeated. The Intelligencer explained the bill’s main features included “a provision for an election of delegates to form a Constitution for the new State, adding the Valley of Virginia to its limits, and requiring the new Constitution to contain a new clause freeing all children of slaves born after the 4th of July, 1863. It ignores altogether the action of the [constitutional] convention recently held at Wheeling.”

The changes, especially the additional counties, were seen by Campbell and others as a way to sabotage any possibility of success. “The Valley people do not want us and we do not want them,” Campbell wrote, indicating that such a sentiment, alone, would assure failure.
“We confess that in view of this report, and the poor prospect that seemingly exists for its rejection, the whole matter of a new State begins to pall upon our taste. We begin to feel as if . . . all the labor, all the anxiety, all of the expense, and all of the troubulous watching and waiting and hoping of our people had gone for nothing.”

In summary Campbell said, “The conclusion of the whole matter is, that Congress must either reject the report of the Senate committee or finally and forever reject us.” He hoped to see the “Senators moving to amend it by substituting the boundaries laid down at Wheeling. As to the provision concerning slavery, our people would have no objections to that,” he added.

During the constitutional convention, Campbell had advised that the issue of slavery needed to be addressed before submitting a request for statehood to Congress. It is “entirely adverse to the best interests of Western Virginia . . . for the present Convention to adjourn without first engrafting a free State provision in our Constitution, in the shape either of a five or ten years emancipation clause,” Campbell wrote. Predicting that the failure to include such a clause would be “a policy that will . . . destroy ourselves,” Campbell warned that “Congress will hesitate long before it will consent to the subdivision of a slave State, simply that two slave States may be made out of it. . . . We believe that when it reaches Congress . . . it will never pass.”

As was frequently the case, Campbell had been right when he told readers months earlier that “the loyal masses of the free States, who are fighting the great battle of Constitutional freedom, and who are endeavoring to stay . . . slavery upon this continent, will never consent that in the very midst of them, it shall burst out in a new
place.”\textsuperscript{7} One of the first motions made from the Senate floor proposed an emancipation clause to the bill.

When the bill for admission of the new state came before the Senate for debate on July 1, Willey addressed the Senate, expressing his surprise over the contents Carlile had drafted.

I confess that I was infinitely surprised when the committee reported to the Senate a bill including fifteen counties within the valley of Virginia in the proposed new State. . . . The people of Northwestern Virginia had looked over all this ground . . . they had considered it well; and they fixed the Alleghany [sic] mountains as the natural barrier . . . because they divided the commercial, industrial, and social relations of the State . . . they were the natural barrier between the desire of the people who wished to be erected into a new State, and the desire of those people who were opposed to being included within the new State.\textsuperscript{8}

Willey went on to explain the implications of including an additional “140,409 white persons, who are almost a unit against being included” and who were part of the “secession element against whom we have been fighting in our midst.” The proposed boundaries also would “incorporate in the new state 31,937 additional slaves,” Willey added. Even if a constitutional convention could be called, likely an impossibility considering the current military situation in the valley area, he said the gathering “could not ordain a constitution which would . . . be accepted by this body” and the result would “forever preclude the people of Western Virginia from making any application to be admitted as a separate State into this Union.”\textsuperscript{9}

“If we were thus united in the same State organization, it would be like tying two cats by the tails; we should be forever fighting each other,” Willey said. “They are utterly and irreconcilably hostile in social relations and hostile in feeling.”\textsuperscript{10}
Debate of the bill in the Senate dragged on for more than six weeks, being set aside and brought forward multiple times. At every turn Carlile made long, convoluted, and often contradictory arguments in debate, or moved amendments to the bill, to jeopardize passage of the bill, all the while professing that he was fervently in favor of passing a measure for statehood. Willey negated Carlile’s amendments by proposing his own amendments as countermeasures, while giving explanations to offset Carlile’s claims to irregular processes in the Wheeling Convention. But Willey could not nullify the harm done by Carlile’s words. A dozen Western Virginian leaders—including Campbell—were in Washington to consult with congressmen and encourage passage of the bill. Most attended the Senate sessions and Campbell said “all saw, deplored and denounced the treachery of Mr. Carlile.”

In June, Campbell had warned readers of the *Intelligencer* about the danger of a delay in passage of the bill. At that time General George B. McClellan’s forces had not yet been driven back in their efforts to capture the Confederate capital at Richmond and members of the Restored Government were confident the campaign would be successful. Planning for such a victory, Peirpoint had conferred with Lincoln about how to gain the cooperation of Virginia citizens in the secessionist-held areas so to institute a broader acceptance of the Restored Government. “Owing to the favorable advance of the Federal troops into Virginia,” Peirpoint was confident there was a “certainty of the rebellion being shortly put down in the state.” Although retreat of the federal troops during the Seven Days battles between June 25 and July 1 had shattered that confidence by the time the statehood bill was being debated on the Senate floor in July, Campbell’s warning regarding delay held true. “The new State must be admitted into the Union as she stands
this session, or else not at all. . . . No future legislature, provided Richmond is taken or evacuated, . . . will ever consent to a new State . . . they would repeal the consent already given.”

Senator Wade was determined to have a statehood bill voted upon before the end of the session on July 17, and several senators supported doing so, including S.C. Pomeroy of Kansas. “It is due to these gentlemen, due in fact to this State of Western Virginia, that some decision be had,” Pomeroy told his fellow senators. “If they are not to come in under their constitution, they ought to know it. If they are to come in, they certainly should know it. I think it is inflicting a great injury on them not to decide the question one way or the other.”

Two weeks earlier Campbell had employed his editorial column to issue a plea to those same senators for help in passing the bill. “We appeal, then, to the intelligent and sincere men of the United States Senate, who are the friends of West Virginia, and who do not desire to see her put back under the domination of Richmond . . . to come promptly to our rescue and save the new state. Now is their only opportunity.”

On July 14, after several hours of non-productive rumination, filled mostly with Carlile’s bloviating, members were becoming frustrated and anxious to move on to other business that needed to be completed before the session closed. After one of Carlile’s tirades, Pomeroy warned his colleagues that the effect of Carlile’s actions would be “to put off the measure for this session,” and motions were made to postpone the bill until the upcoming session in December, but not approved. However, Carlile’s actions had a more detrimental effect, according to Pomeroy. “If the Senator himself is not in favor of the admission of Western Virginia, he need not expect others to be; and if the people of
Western Virginia do not send Senators here who are in favor of this measure, they certainly cannot expect to get it through.”\textsuperscript{16}

Finally, “Wade became very indignant at the course of Mr. Carlile, and openly charged him with endeavoring to defeat the new State, while pretending to be its friend,” the \textit{Intelligencer} reported to readers regarding Wade’s address to the Senate during the debate.\textsuperscript{17}

The very extraordinary course the Senator from Virginia [Carlile] has seen fit to take has so entirely disappointed me. . . . I saw a Senator from the State itself rise, so evidently with no other purpose than to talk against time, and thus to defeat the bill. . . . We have had a new proposition, a long argument, and a recurrence to old speeches . . . all coming from a man pretending to be a friend of this proposition. Any man knows that if anything was calculated under these circumstances to defeat this measure, it was precisely the course he has seen fit to take with it. . . . What has been the purport of his speech, except to shake the confidence of the Senate itself in the constitutional convention that framed the constitution which we have been asked to ratify? . . . Sir, there is something wrong in this matter. . . . It takes us all by surprise, and it jeopardizes the measure.\textsuperscript{18}

Willey, steadfast throughout the ordeal, exhibited the backbone that Campbell had earlier denied the senator possessed. Stating that Carlile “misrepresents the will of the Legislature that sent him here, with scarcely a dissenting voice,” Willey took on the mantle of leadership for the loyal people of Western Virginia. He proposed an amendment to Carlile’s bill that replaced the whole of the content with language that was in accord with the original documents sent by Governor Peirpoint, including details so carefully discussed and planned during the conventions in Wheeling. To reach compromise with those senators who objected to admitting a state in which slavery would continue to be legal for some persons, Willey proposed a more favorable gradual emancipation clause be added to the constitution. Campbell had earlier criticized Willey’s conciliatory nature, but the senator’s statesmanship helped to save the statehood effort.
Near the end of the debate, Willey’s comments to the legislative body added an exclamation point to his demonstration of leadership.

I stand here, where my colleague does not stand, representing the voice of the people of Virginia, who ask for freedom, who ask for severance from the eastern section of the State. He gets up here . . . when the Senate of the United States is about to bestow upon us the long prayed for boon, and he interposes an objection, to postpone and defer our long-cherished hopes and desires . . . . I hope we shall have the vote now.¹⁹

Shortly thereafter, the vote was taken and the bill, as amended by Willey, passed the Senate. Twenty-three votes were in favor and seventeen were opposed, including the vote cast by Carlile.²⁰ But the approved bill had been “sent to the House . . . too near the close of the session to get through before an adjournment.” Campbell told readers the delay was because of the “treachery of Mr. Carlile,” assuring them “the bill would have passed the Senate in time to have gone through the House also,” if not for his delaying tactics.²¹

The old adage to never argue with—or in this case make enemies of—someone who buys ink by the barrel could not have been truer than it was in Carlile’s betrayal. Upon Campbell’s return to Wheeling, the Intelligencer published a supplement “containing the whole debate on the new State question in the Senate.” Campbell said the “debate will be read with great interest by our West Virginia people, and will take away all excuse from Mr. Carlile and his supporters, if he has any, that he has not had a fair hearing.”²² Campbell’s editorials and the articles he included from other publications continued to denounce Carlile’s deeds for months after the Senate fiasco, to make sure “our people shall understand thoroughly his treachery.” Campbell admitted that “they who have all along judged the worst of the Senator have judged the truest.”²³
When Carlile accused the *Intelligencer* of printing, “as usual, a false and abusive article of me,” Campbell fired back that the newspaper only published “all the multitudinous and crushing and overwhelming vital facts which we have arrayed against him from the indisputable record.” After a rundown of those “facts” Campbell directly addressed Carlile in regard to the *Intelligencer’s*, and his own, disappointment in and contempt for the man.

No! Mr. Carlile, the record is not false, it is you who are “false.” . . . We gladly recognized you as the leader of Western Virginia, and we gave you, in unstinted measure, the best energies of this paper. We never asked a personal favor in return. All that we asked and desired of you was that you would be true to the proud mission in which you had been called. Against the better judgment of many friends, we nominated and supported you for your present position, and it is but little for us to say that we contributed chiefly to your election. . . . We regret for yourself, and still more for the cause, your lost character.

Campbell believed the *Intelligencer* had helped to make Carlile’s political career and intended to do just as much to extinguish it. In addition to Campbell’s personal animosity toward the man, he feared that Carlile’s influence among fellow congressmen could still threaten passage of the statehood measure in the House of Representatives. Campbell was determined to neutralize any threat from Carlile by continuing the negative press against him until after the House convened in session on December 7 and voted on the admission bill.

The *Intelligencer* was a staple of Western Virginia news for other publications, as well as for its own readers, a fact Campbell knew and appreciated. On November 27 Campbell addressed the *Intelligencer’s* exchanges in an attempt to increase the reach of his message. In a column titled “An Article for Our Exchanges,” Campbell outlined the chain of events that led to the current version of the House bill for admission of a new
state, explained the importance of passage, urged newspapers to run the copy he
provided, and encouraged all to instruct their congressmen to vote in favor of the bill. In a
later issue, the *Intelligencer* featured comments from the New York *Tribune* and the
Washington *Chronicle* that had accompanied their use of Campbell’s article.

The erection of West Virginia into a new State (and a free State) will be a mighty
blow at the rebellion. . . . We appeal for consideration, for charity, for justice.
Your might is like the waves of the sea. Will you not help us break down the
barriers . . . will you not speak a word to the country and Congress in our behalf. .
. . Give us, we conjure you, a moral support at home and a material support by
instructions to your Congressmen. Will you welcome us to the great fraternity of
loyalty . . . or will you thrust us back into the clutches of Treason and Despotism,
to be dragged into the abyss of ruin the rebellion has opened beneath our very
feet”26

On December 6, a day before the House session opened, E.H. Caldwell, one of
five commissioners appointed by the new state’s Constitutional Convention, arrived in
Washington to represent the West Virginia statehood movement. He wrote to Peirpoint
that only three other statehood men, from Wood County, were in Washington to help.
“You can be of service if only with Mr. Bingham,” Caldwell wrote, referring to
Congressman John H. Bingham of Ohio. “He and [Thaddeus] Stevens of Pa. propose
amendments to the Senate Bill which will a little further define the feature as to slavery. I
think you can get Bingham right.”27

The original stipulation in the West Virginia constitution said simply that “no
slave shall be brought, or free person of color come, into this State for permanent
residence therein.” The Willey amendment to the Senate bill, as it came to be known,
placated senators who had objections to admitting a state in which slavery was perpetual
by adding specific emancipation language to the constitution: “The children of slaves
born within the limits of this State after the fourth day of March, eighteen hundred and
sixty-three, shall be free, and that all slaves within the said State, who shall, at the time aforesaid, be under the age of ten years, shall be free when they arrive at the age of twenty-one years, and all slaves over ten and under twenty-one years shall be free when they arrive at the age of twenty-five years, and no slave shall be permitted to come into the State for permanent residence therein.”28

If the bill passed, Willey’s change would have to be adopted by a reconvened constitutional convention and ratified by the citizens of West Virginia, many of whom were not opposed to slavery. Caldwell, among others, feared additional stipulations to limit the institution could endanger approval at home. In a second letter to Peirpoint, Caldwell reported that he had “dispatched to Campbell & Paxton,” referring to A.W. Campbell and another of the West Virginia commissioners, James Paxton, requesting they travel to Washington where they could help lobby members of the House for support. “They are much wanted here.”29

Campbell was in Washington when the House took up the question for debate on December 9. As senators had, some representatives in the House questioned the constitutionality of the action. “The Constitution of the United States requires that no State shall be divided unless the assent of its Legislature be first obtained,” Martin F. Conway, representative from Kansas, told the House. “The question turns on whether the State of Virginia of which a Mr. Pierpont is Governor, is the lawful State or not,” he argued.30

“The argument in favor of the validity of the Wheeling government is that the original State of Virginia fell into treason and became null and void, and caused a vacuum which could only be filled in this way,” Conway told the House, asking what
right Peirpoint would have “to assume the office of Governor over any other individual who might wish it. Where did the law come from which gave him his warrant? From a mob or a mass meeting? Neither mobs nor mass meetings make laws under our system.”

Other congressmen were satisfied, however, that the process was legal and admission of the new pro-Union state was expedient, in consideration of the war. On December 10, after only one day of debate, Campbell sent good news to the *Intelligencer*.

“The new State Bill passed by a vote of 96 to 55 as it came from the Senate. West Virginia members of Congress and delegations here are now being congratulated by immense crowds of people on the Thirty-Fifth Star.”

The *Intelligencer* encouraged West Virginians to celebrate the good news, too.

“In every town, far and near . . . bring out your speakers, bring out your baby wakers [cannons] if you have any, bring out your music, run up your flags, and let there be such a grand and universal rejoicing as the Western Virginia hills never saw before.”

After the passage of the statehood bill by the House, Campbell finally declared a cease-fire in the vituperative campaign against Carlile that had frequented the pages of the *Intelligencer* since July. The denunciation of Carlile had expanded throughout the fall, with other publications following the *Intelligencer’s* lead in lambasting Carlile. The state legislature had requested his resignation, which he refused to provide. But when there was no longer a threat that Carlile could prevent Congress from approving the statehood bill, Campbell finalized his antagonistic barrage against the senator. He did so in a dramatic fashion under the headline, “Obituary.”
Carlile is in truth no longer a Senator from Virginia. That body that made him has unmade him, so far as it could. . . . We have done with him. The grave has closed over all there was political in this man, and no earthly chastisements can reach beyond the grave. . . . Our task is done. To history consign we the record of our erring brother, and there we take our leave of him. 34

Although the threat of Carlile adversely influencing the possibility of statehood was minimal after the Congressional passage, there was one final obstacle to statehood: President Lincoln had ten days after the bill was presented to him in which he could veto it. Lincoln had been supportive of the Western Virginians from the beginning of their uprising against secession, being the first to recognize the Restored Government’s authority. Peirpoint and Lincoln had been in frequent communication regarding the situation in the region and the Western Virginians expected Lincoln’s approval signature would be a formality. However, Lincoln was not so quick to consent.

On December 15, Orville H. Browning, a senator from Illinois and devoted friend of Lincoln, found occasion to speak with the president privately while he and others were visiting Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln. Browning gave Lincoln a copy of the bill that had been passed just days before for the creation of West Virginia. “He was distressed at its passage, and asked me how long he could retain it before approving or vetoing,” Browning said. Browning responded that the president had ten days, to which Lincoln responded “he wished he had more.” Browning agreed to “give him a few days more” and wrote in his diary that he “replied . . . I would not now lay it before him, but would retain it and furnish him a copy to examine which I did.” 35 The bill was not officially presented to the president until seven days later, giving Lincoln until the end of the year to sign or veto it.
At the time, Lincoln was dealing with other matters that engrossed his thoughts. From December 11 to December 15 the Union army had engaged in a battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia, that had ended in demoralizing defeat. More than 12,500 Union soldiers were dead, wounded, or missing by the time the Union troops retreated. The defeat provided another blow to the waning confidence of the Northern public in Lincoln’s administration and in the war effort.

Lincoln also was aware that a cabal of Republican senators, discontent with him and his Cabinet, had recently met in caucus and were intent on causing trouble for the administration. Browning, who had attended the caucus meeting, said the men were “all expressive of want of confidence in the President and his cabinet . . . denouncing the President and expressing a willingness to vote for a resolution asking him to resign.”36 Lincoln told Browning the group wished “to get rid of me, and I am sometimes half disposed to gratify them. . . . We are now on the brink of destruction.” A committee of the senators who had caucused was scheduled to meet with Lincoln on December 17; the situation had caused Lincoln to have “been more distressed than by any event of my life,” he told Browning.37

Willey, who was almost certainly aware of the caucus and may have attended, wrote to Peirpoint on the day of the meeting. “We have great fears that the President will veto the new State bill.”38

Even without the distraction of an impending confrontation with disgruntled senators, Lincoln had several reasons to disfavor the West Virginia bill. To approve the division of the state of Virginia would set an undesirable precedent that might lead to
other states dividing in similar actions, which would undermine efforts that would be needed to reintegrate the seceded states back into the Union.

The installation of a Restored Government in the state of Virginia, although organically driven by the people of the region, served an early prototype of the reconstruction plan Lincoln would introduce a year later. The plan stipulated that a state could be reintegrated into the Union when at least 10 percent of the voters from the state had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States and pledged to abide by emancipation as called for in the Emancipation Proclamation that Lincoln would issue on January 1, 1863.

In much the same way the Wheeling Convention had established the Restored Government, the Proclamation of Amnesty, introduced to Congress in December 1863, would provide for those who had taken the oath of allegiance to commence home rule and elect state officers who would be recognized within the federal government.39 Lincoln’s intent for this type of reintegration was for the whole of each seceded state to return into the Union, intact, under governing bodies that would repudiate secession.40

Upon the receipt of Willey’s letter, Governor Peirpoint immediately sent a telegram to Lincoln. “Apprehensions are felt here of veto of the new State Bill. It would be disastrous to the Union cause in Western Virginia. I don’t see how we can satisfy union men. It will be death to our cause. I can’t see what we can do.”41

On December 20 he sent another telegram to Lincoln, endorsed by the state and federal officers with offices in the Custom House at Wheeling—including Postmaster A.W. Campbell. The officers and several members of the Restored Government House of Delegates urged Lincoln to “sign the bill. Do not think of allowing it to become a law
simply by default.” They insisted that the bill’s failure would “ruin the Union cause in Western Va,” saying that the delay had already put “arguments into the mouths of the disloyal.” The group beseeched Lincoln “for the good of the country not to hesitate.”

The West Virginia statehood movement had strong support among congressmen and some of Lincoln’s Cabinet and a practical argument in regard to the future of the Union. The argument had gained strength with the Union’s losses in the Battle of Fredericksburg, in which the Seventh Virginia Regiment was involved. On December 20, Peirpoint wrote to a Jacob Blair, a Virginia congressman who had been the primary spokesman for the state during the House debate, referring to the battle as the “tereble [sic] repulse at Fredrickburg [sic].” He asked Blair to assure that the Virginia regiment’s injured soldiers were taken care of and assured him the state would reimburse the cost. Peirpoint lamented the ill effects that failure to achieve statehood would have on the Union cause in Western Virginia. “A thick gloom hangs over my mind about the new State I dont [sic] know how the Union sentiment of W. Va can be satisfied—Butternutism [support for the Confederates, many of whom wore homespun uniforms of butternut color] will sweep W. Va. In fact I fear the soldiers in the field will throw down their arms it will be tereble—tereble [sic] indeed.”

Peirpoint placed responsibility to avoid the looming disaster directly on Lincoln’s shoulders. “Oh who shall deliver me from the position. . . . If the bill fails I shall come to Washington immediately. . . . If it is on Constitutional grounds—I dont [sic] see very well how I and the Senator Occupying [sic] the position he does, (I mean Willey)—can continue to occupy [sic] our position.” Blair provided Peirpoint’s letter to the President,
who endorsed it, indicating he was aware of the truth in Peirpoint’s last sentence. “I can’t occupy [sic] a position by sufferance—I occupy [sic] it legally or not.”43

Lincoln also received correspondence from those opposing the bill. John Lawrence, a Union loyalist living in eastern Virginia, wrote to the president pleading for him to veto the bill, claiming its passage would prove to be a punitive measure against the eastern Virginians who had “submitted to Secession,” but of whom “more than one half . . . are as loyal to the Government as any in the Union.”44 Postmaster General Montgomery Blair forwarded a letter of similar sentiment from John Mason, of Fairfax County in eastern Virginia, describing the writer as “a man of influence in the state . . . also an unflinching patriot.” The letter was endorsed by John Underwood, now an auditor in the U.S. Department of the Treasury, who had been instrumental in introducing the Republican Party in Western Virginia and who had recommended Blair for the Cabinet position in which he served. Underwood’s endorsement said he fully concurred and “agree[d] with Mr. Mason in his objections to the bill that passed the House.”45

The opposition concerns echoed those of Joseph Segar, representing the eastern Virginia counties of Tyler and Warwick in the House of Representatives. By approving division of the state, he believed Congress was leaving the loyal areas in eastern Virginia—such as those he represented—defenseless and the move would end any opportunity to reclaim other areas of Virginia back into Union loyalty. Western Virginia, he stated on the House floor, was “a Union nucleus, around which a great Union mass will ultimately gather. . . . Destroy the nucleus and the Union gathering is dissipated, and rebellion, having all the nuclei, is triumphant.”46
None of the correspondents knew that the bill had not yet been presented to the president for consideration. On December 22, Blair wrote to Peirpoint with an update on the bill’s progress. “There has been such confusion here for the last ten days that the President has not acted on our new State bill. It was not taken to him at his request, he has therefore ten days yet.”

Eager for the president to act quickly, Blair had visited Lincoln to encourage his signature. Blair wrote to Peirpoint, “He has doubts! Think he may sign it but it is not certain. . . . Had you not better come on?” Blair confirmed that “Wade, Bingham & others think he will sign the bill . . . but I have doubts.” The failure to get the president’s signature, Blair continued, “would be a repudiation of the restored Government” that would require both Peirpoint and Willey to resign out of self-respect.47

Campbell did not receive Blair’s information about the delay immediately, and on December 23, after explaining the process of the ten-day period in which a veto can occur, he had told Intelligencer readers that he would “presume most likely, that the bill was sent up to the White House from the Capitol, next day after it passed.”48 Then on December 24, still having received no word to the contrary, Campbell somewhat cautiously relayed to readers that the bill had not been vetoed, as it was more than ten days since the House agreed to the bill. “We presume that we may congratulate our people on being ‘out of the woods,’ now, so far as an apprehended veto to our new State bill is concerned. . . . Certainly the tenth day must have passed yesterday . . . allowing that the usual routine was followed.”49

But the usual routine had not been followed and the delay in presentation meant the bill was still vulnerable to veto. After belatedly receiving Blair’s message of the
twenty-second, Campbell backpedaled, explaining to readers that he had just received news about the delay in presentation of the bill to the president, meaning Lincoln still had more than a week in which he could veto. A telegram on the twenty-fourth from Blair, however, said he “saw the President again today. Believe all is well.”

After he learned the bill was still in danger, Campbell turned, again, to his network for assistance. In a December 24 letter to Secretary of State William Seward, Campbell asked Seward to use his influence with Lincoln to assure the president would not veto the bill. Campbell said, “[T]he veto of that bill would be the greatest calamity, next only to a dissolution of the govt, that could befall our people here. Their hearts are bound up in it.” Calling the new state a “synonym with the Union” for Western Virginians, Campbell warned Seward, “Defeat the new state, & you defeat the Union sentiment. You perfectly crush it out.”

Describing himself as a “spokesman of an intensely excited public sentiment,” Campbell recalled his relationship with Seward. “You know me well enough, I trust, to believe that I would not advise the govt amiss in this crisis. I see here all around me what I feel to be . . . ominous results from a veto. I assure you I dread to think of the possibility of such a thing.”

A day earlier, still unsure if he should sign the bill, Lincoln had requested Seward and the other Cabinet members to each provide an opinion in answer to two questions related to the bill. Was the said act constitutional? Was the said act expedient? Three of the members supported the bill with their opinions—including Seward; three opposed admitting the new state into the Union.
When he submitted it on December 26, Seward’s opinion echoed the sentiments Campbell had expressed in his letter. “The people of Western Virginia will be safer . . . [and] the harmony and peace of the Union will be promoted by allowing the new State to be formed and erected.” 54

As of December 30 no indication had yet been given about whether the president would sign the bill before the ten-day period ended on December 31. Campbell, Peirpoint, U.S. Marshal E.M. Norton, and James Paxton, a member of the Constitutional Convention, gathered in the governor’s office to discuss the situation. The result of the discussion was an eloquent letter to the president. Written by Campbell, who had the closest political ties to Lincoln, it encompassed the men’s passionate plea for Lincoln’s signature before the deadline. Peirpoint sent a brief note to Lincoln immediately, with Campbell’s letter inserted, asking the president to read Campbell’s letter as “it contains the truth in my opinion.” Peirpoint wrote, “The union men of West Va were not originally for the Union because of the new state—but the sentiment for the two have become identified. If one is stricken down I dont [sic] know what is become of the other.” 55

Although Campbell had first met Lincoln only two years earlier, he called upon whatever political capital he had accumulated with the president to seek reciprocal support.

I write to you, Mr. President, as your ardent political and personal friend—as one who labored as hard in the cause of your election, and, since then, in the cause of the Union as any man in the country. Before the people, on the stump & in my newspaper I have never ceased for a day to do my uttermost to make friends for your administration and the great cause of Union.

With these claims of sincerity and anxiety upon your attention, I ask you to consider . . . a new state. . . . I wish simply to call your attention to the present
feeling and the future danger connected with a veto of the bill. . . . A people could not be more deeply excited on the issue of any question, of a political kind, than our people for the result, in your hands, of their long effort and their long deferred hope of a new state. . . . A veto of the bill would be a disaster, the consequences of which I dread to contemplate. I verily believe that it would be a death blow to our Union sentiment. I can not [sic] see that there would be any coherency in it in the future. It would have lost the central magnet. It would be utterly disintegrated and demoralized. With our people the Union and the new State are convertible terms. Crush the one and you, as certain as death, in my opinion, crush the other. In the present prospects of our national affairs the expectation of a new state keeps thousands from falling away, and I see in a veto the sure melting away of our Union strengths.

Mr President, as your friend, as an original, unconditional and unchangeable Union man, I say to you that, for the sake of the cause, now so far imperiled & so precarious in its issue, you can never afford to veto the new State bill. If it was given me above all things to decide what could be most harmful to the cause of the Union . . . I would say a veto of this bill. And so would say every loyal man here. So say nine loyal newspapers against one disloyal. . . . a veto of the bill, in my earnest and most deliberate opinion, will be the death warrant of unionism in Western Va. 56

Lincoln carefully considered the same questions of expediency and constitutionality that he had asked his Cabinet members to answer and on December 31 produced a written opinion, as he had asked them to do. Lincoln found the act to be both constitutional and expedient, saying that what mattered most was whether “the admission or rejection of the new State would, under all the circumstances tend the more strongly to the restoration of the national authority throughout the Union. That which keeps most in this direction is the most expedient at this time.” 57

Lincoln also acknowledged the truth of the claims Campbell and others had so passionately made about the importance of continuing Union sentiment in the region. “We can scarcely dispense with the aid of West Virginia in this struggle; much less can we afford to have her against us, in Congress and in the field,” he wrote. “Her brave and good men regard her admission into the union as a matter of life and death. They have
been true to the union under very severe trial. We have so acted as to justify their hopes; and we can not [sic] fully retain their confidence and co-operation if we seem to break faith with them.”

Despite his doubts, in the end Lincoln recognized that the circumstances of the times called for extraordinary measures. “The division of a State is dreaded as a precedent. But a measure made expedient by a war, is no precedent for times of peace,” he wrote. “It is said that the admission of West-Virginia [sic], is secession, and tolerated only because it is our secession. Well, if we call it by that name, there is still difference enough between secession against the constitution, and secession in favor of the constitution.”

Lincoln had promised Blair an answer on New Year’s Day and had instructed the congressman to come to his office on that morning. “I was there early in the morning,” wrote Blair in a letter to Willey, “and he kept his promise as he always did. He brought the bill to me and holding it open before my eyes, he said: ‘Do you see that signature?’ . . . . Approved, Abraham Lincoln.”

Later in his life, Peirpoint would repeatedly declare that Lincoln had told him it was Campbell’s letter, received on December 31, which solidified his final decision to sign the bill. Regardless of what motivated the decision, there was celebration in Wheeling. The wives of Governor Peirpoint; Samuel Crane, auditor; and L.A. Hagans, secretary of the commonwealth, wrote Lincoln on New Year’s Day that “the wildest enthusiasm prevails. The people are running to & fro, each one anxious to bear the ‘Glad Tidings of this great Joy’.” The “loyal Ladies of West Va.” expressed their appreciation
for the president’s signature on the bill, saying that as the wives of state officers they were “doubly grateful—you have saved us from contempt and disgrace.”

With Lincoln’s signature West Virginia had been accepted into the Union, with the contingency that the constitution be revised to reflect the emancipation of slaves—as stipulated in the Willey amendment to the bill. On March 26, 1863, the state overwhelmingly voted for acceptance of the constitutional revision, after which, on April 20, Lincoln issued the required document certifying that West Virginia had met the requirements and would officially become a state in sixty days—on June 20, 1863.

Little more than two months after his thirtieth birthday, Campbell celebrated the realization of the goal toward which he had contributed so much. Since his purchase of the *Intelligencer* six years earlier, Campbell had grown from a novice editor and aspiring leader in the Republican Party, to an accomplished newspaperman with considerable influence amid his colleagues and party affiliates. *The Borderland in the Civil War*, a 1927 work of history, referred to the *Intelligencer* as Wheeling’s greatest single contribution “to the cause of the Union—not even excepting the military organizations.” The author said Campbell, “constantly championed the principles of nationalism, appealing to every sentiment and interest that could affect public opinion favorably; but he never made the mistake of introducing purely party issues or abolitionist arguments.”

A letter to Campbell in December of 1862 attests to the esteem readers had for the editor and his newspaper. A.A. Reger, a subscriber from Morgantown, called the *Intelligencer* an “excellent daily” and said he could not “get along without it. I regard your paper (almost) as one of the necessaries of life.” Reger wrote to inform Campbell
that the members of his Methodist church had collected five dollars with which they had paid for the editors of the paper to be honorary life members in a society of the Annual West Virginia Methodist Conference, “as a token of respect, and appreciation, entertained for them, for the strong, earnest & persevering efforts made by them in behalf of our new state.”

However, the foundation of Campbell’s influence was built on more than his editorial skill and the power of the press, although he wielded those to maximum benefit. His broad knowledge, integrity, and fearlessness—characteristics nurtured during his upbringing and expanded by Campbell as a young adult—contributed greatly to his success. Granville Hall, Campbell’s employee, referred to Campbell as earnest, single minded, and “the statehood movement’s earliest friend and faithfulest [sic] supporter.”

When Rebecca Harding Davis wrote in *Bits of Gossip* about the Scotch-Irish immigrants who settled in the Wheeling region, she was not specifically describing Campbell, but her words fit well the nature of the young businessman whose family was part of the group she identified. The Scotch-Irishman, she wrote, had “contributed to the national character his shrewd common sense, his loyalty to . . . his family, and his country.” He “does not trouble himself to talk about his work, or to set forth his merits or those of his forefathers,” she said, but is “an able, reticent, pig-headed, devout fellow, and cares little what the world thinks of him.”

Campbell would continue to be an advocate for the state he had helped to create, but with the goal of statehood realized, he would soon direct his energies to new adventure. By the time the war ended in 1865 he would take on new roles, as husband and father.
Notes

Epigraph. Wheeling Intelligencer, May 30, 1862, CA.
2. “Our New State,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 26, 1862, CA. The Senate bill written by Carlile added fifteen counties to the proposed state, only three of which had been provided for in the Constitution approved in April 1861. The core counties listed in the constitution were: Barbour, Boone, Braxton, Brooke, Cabell, Calhoun, Clay, Doddridge, Fayette, Gilmer, Greenbrier, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Kanawha, Lewis, Logan, Marion, Marshall, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Monongalia, Monroe, Nicholas, Ohio, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Preston, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor, Tucker, Tyler, Upshur, Wayne, Webster, Wetzel, Wirt, Wood, and Wyoming. Pendleton, Hardy, Hampshire, and Morgan also were included because they voted in favor of joining the new state by approving the constitution. Berkeley, Jefferson and Frederick were listed in the constitution as optional if the citizens of those counties approved the constitution; only Frederick did not become part of the state. The additional counties listed in the Senate bill but not in the Constitution were: Clark, Warren, Page, Shenandoah, Rockingham, August, Highland, Bath, Rockbridge, Botetourt, Craig, and Allegany.
3. Ibid.
5. “Our New State.”
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. “The Testimony,” Wheeling Intelligencer, July 31, 1862, CA. At the end of June, Campbell had traveled to Franklin, in Pendleton County, to see General Fremont after the battle of McDowell and, while there, decided to travel east to Washington from that point. Not expecting the extended journey, he had packed extra clothes. He requested his brother Gus to send his “Sunday pants,” so he would be appropriately dressed in Washington. In a note from Gus that Campbell said was “as characteristic as ever . . . received from Gus,” the brother told Campbell to “Be careful, stand [firm] and see the Salvation of the Lord but don’t be taken prisoner.” Included in Campbell’s Scrapbook in AWC.
12. “F.H. Peirpoint to Abraham Lincoln,” March 14, 1862, ALP. Peirpoint recommended a “circular letter” to the people of Virginia setting out who would be protected and stipulating no clemency would be extended to those “engaged in guerrilla warfare.” He also suggested that the letter grant protection of slave property to assure the peoples’ cooperation in restoring the loyal government. Lincoln told Peirpoint to draft a proclamation and send it to Washington for Lincoln’s personal review before it was issued. The failure of the Richmond campaign in June 1862 resulted in the letter not being issued.
16. The Congressional Globe. The Official Proceedings of Congress, Thirty-seventh Congress, Second Session:3311. Many historians have wondered why Carlile made such a complete reversal from his earlier avid support of statehood, but little evidence has been found to explain the change. In Carlile’s documents he often displayed an egocentricity that might indicate self-centered motives, as new state information presented to the Senate was not what he had originally proposed, including partial gradual emancipation. Or he may have had a personal rift with some of the other founding fathers, resulting in his actions on the Senate floor casting doubt on the legitimacy of the Restored Government he had helped to initiate. There has been supposition that he disapproved of the federal government stipulating the new state must amend its constitution to provide full emancipation because slavery was legal by interpretation of the U.S.
Constitution. The author believes it was likely a combination of his strong belief that the state had a right to
determine its own constitution without federal intervention and that his ego led him to see himself in the
role of a hero standing up for what was right, even if at the expense of his constituents desires.

Session:3314.
23. “Mr. Carlile’s Speech,” Wheeling Intelligencer, July 26, 1862, CA.
25. Ibid.
LVA.
28. “What Comes Next?,” Wheeling Intelligencer, December 12, 1862, V
Representative, Tuesday, Dec. 9, 1862,” New York Times, December 16, 1862,
delivered-house.html?pagewanted=all
31. Ibid.
32. “New State Admitted Vote 96 to 55!,” Wheeling Intelligencer, December 11, 1862, V
34. “Obituary,” Wheeling Intelligencer, December 13, 1862, V
35. Theodore Calvin Pease and James G. Randall, eds., *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning*, vol. 1
(Springfield, IL: Illinois State Historical Library, 1925), 596,
https://archive.org/stream/diaryoforvillehi20brow#page/n743/mode/2up
36. Ibid., 1:599.
37. Ibid., 1:600.
38. “W.T. Willey to F.H. Peirpoint,” December 17, 1862, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers (1814-1899),
LVA.
39. *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, New Series 1 (Washington, DC, n.d.), 3. This plan to reintegrate
states back into the Union is often referred to as the 10 Percent Plan.
41. “Telegram: F.H. Peirpoint to A. Lincoln,” December 18, 1862, ALP.
42. F.H. Peirpoint to Abraham Lincoln,” December 20, 1862, ALP.
43. “F.H. Peirpoint to J.G. Blair,” December 20, 1862, ALP.
44. “John O. Lawrence to A. Lincoln,” December 13, 1862, ALP.
47. “Jacob Blair to F.H. Peirpoint,” December 22, 1862, Francis Harrison Pierpont Papers (1814-1899),
LVA.
49. “Out of the Woods, We Think,” Wheeling Intelligencer, December 24, 1862, CA.
50. “Telegram: Jacob Blair to A.W. Campbell,” December 24, 1862, AWC.
52. Ibid.
53. “Abraham Lincoln to Gentlemen of the Cabinet,” December 23, 1862, ALP.

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55. “F.H. Peirpoint to Abraham Lincoln,” December 30, 1862, ALP.
56. “A.W. Campbell to Abraham Lincoln,” December 31, 1862, ALP.
58. Ibid.
59. “A Chapter of Inside History in Regard to the Admission of West Virginia into the Union: Letter from Ex-Congressman Blair to Ex-Senator Willey,” Wheeling Intelligencer, January 22, 1876, CA.
60. “Gov. Pierpoint. A Talk Between the Grand Old Man and Mr. A. W. Campbell.,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 14, 1897, CA.; Also, see Anna Pierpont Siviter, Recollections of War and Peace, 1861-1868 (Putnam, 1938), 103. Anna Siviter was F.H. Pierpont’s only daughter who lived to adulthood. Both sources include a version of this story, crediting the original telling to Governor Pierpont. However, in a version of the story written by a correspondent of the Intelligencer in 1886 after an interview with the governor, that gentleman claimed it was a telegram, dictated by himself and written by Campbell that swayed Lincoln’s decision.
61. “Mrs. F.H. Peirpoint to Abraham Lincoln,” January 1, 1863, ALP.
63. “A.A. Reger to Editors, Intelligencer,” December 15, 1862, AWC.
65. Rebecca Harding Davis, Bits of Gossip (Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1904), 89.
Chapter 8: 1865-1868—Love and Life

I lent my love a book one day,
She brought it back, I laid it by;
‘Twas little either had to say—
She was so strange and I so shy.

For here and there her love was writ
In old, half faded pencil signs,
As if she yielded, bit by bit,
Her heart, in dots and under-lines.

—Wheeling Intelligencer

Miss Annie Woods Crawford, upon whom A.W. Campbell had been calling, was more than a pretty lass. Although eight years younger, she shared Archie’s interests, captivated his intellect, and even signed memos in the same way he did, each using their initials: A.W.C.

Both Annie and Archie loved books and reading. In 1860 Annie wrote to Campbell thanking him for reading matter he had sent to her. “I am sorry there are no articles in them deserving of particular notice, as I should so much like to venture a criticism and inflict upon you the necessity of reading it,” she said, explaining that hers was a “very malicious design no doubt—but . . . criticism without established reason is arrogance.” Annie went on to warn Campbell, “Wait until I publish, and I shall be . . . savage.”¹

Annie sent books to Campbell, as well. “With the ‘Eclectic’ and the ‘Review,’ for the loan of which many thanks, I send you [Charles] Kingsley’s novels, ‘Yeast,’ and ‘Hypatia.’ They will perhaps interest you,” she wrote. Annie expressed that Kingsley, a British historian and novelist, wrote “great content, sometimes it flashes forth so brightly as to be almost mistaken for Genius; and it is, I think, in his essays, rather than in his
novels, or some in his poetry, that the true delicacy . . . of his intellect finds expression,”
she told Campbell. “Read the books—I think you will not differ from me in regard to the
author.”

However, soon after Archie began to court Annie in 1860, the chaos and
uncertainty engendered by the election of Abraham Lincoln in the autumn of that year,
followed by the Civil War and statehood struggles in West Virginia, preempted the
possibility of their courtship being a brief one. Campbell directed his attention to
imminent matters, including leading support for the Union in Western Virginia and
independence from eastern Virginia. West Virginia statehood in 1863 was a turning point
for Campbell, after which he began to redirect some of his energies. Although the war
and his position as postmaster still demanded his attention and he continued his
involvement with politics, the press, and the nurture of his new state, the time and passion
he had expended on reaching the goal of statehood shifted toward more domestic desires.
He asked Annie Woods Crawford to marry.

On the evening of March 10, 1864, Campbell’s uncle, Bishop Alexander
Campbell, performed the wedding ceremony of Annie and Archie in Wheeling at the
home of her parents, Richard and Rebecca Crawford. Archie was thirty-one years old,
Annie was twenty-three.

In his first thirty years of life Campbell had built a successful business and a
stellar reputation. When the new state of West Virginia chose U.S. senators in 1863, he
had been nominated in recognition of the part he had played in bringing the state to life.
A fellow editor at the Fairmont National praised Campbell’s dedication to the state,
urging “the importance of a close, careful and scrutinizing investigation of the merits,
records, qualifications and political standing of men chosen to represent us at
Washington.” The National’s editor, J.N. Bord, “designated Mr. A.W. Campbell as a man
whose merits were paramount to all others; whose record upon both the Union and new
State questions was unimpeachable, and whose qualifications and future course in
sustaining the government, no man could question.”

Bord claimed Campbell “had not knowledge whatever, not even the slightest
intimation” that he had planned to present Campbell’s name for the Senate position, even
though Campbell showed “extreme reticence on this subject and refusal to play the part
of a politician, even in his own behalf.” While this reluctance by Campbell to advance his
own future as a politician was viewed by his friends as “too indifferent to what they
consider[ed] justly and modestly due to himself,” Bord was pleased to put forward
Campbell’s name for such consideration. “The truth is,” Bord stated, “I had but a very
slight personal acquaintance with him; but, like thousands of other friends of West
Virginia, I knew him to be a staunch defender of the Right, and a zealous, faithful and
unswerving advocate of a set of principles which have always met my hearty approval.”

Campbell was one of four candidates nominated for the esteemed position, along
with Peter Van Winkle and Waitman Willey, both of whom were actively involved in the
statehood movement, and B.H. Smith, a strong Union man from the southern part of the
state. At that time, the election of senators was held in the state legislature, with each
member of the body having a vote. Thirty-five votes were required for election and
Willey won one Senate seat on the first ballot, while Campbell had the second highest
number of votes, with twenty-seven. A second ballot had Campbell leading, with Van
Winkle gaining and by the fourth ballot the two were tied, each with thirty votes. Since
neither had received the requisite thirty-five votes, balloting continued until finally, on the sixth ballot, Campbell’s supporters shifted to Van Winkle, who won the seat by a vote of forty-six to twelve.⁶

If Campbell was disappointed in the loss, he made no indication of it to readers of the *Intelligencer*. Having celebrated his thirtieth birthday only four months before the election, Campbell viewed the nomination and support as a compliment. In the issue of the newspaper in which the final election results were published, Campbell acknowledged the honor of being nominated.

It is due to my friends in the Legislature . . . some public recognition of my sense of obligation to them. Under the circumstances, being barely of the constitutional age and having to encounter the strong aversion of the members to selecting two Senators from the same end of the state, I accept the votes that were given me as evidence of a strong desire to compliment my efforts on behalf of the new state and the union cause. I am not disappointed by my non-election, neither have I the least feeling because the votes fell eight short of success, for until a few weeks ago a thing as being made a candidate for the Senate never entered into my expectations. On the contrary I am abundantly satisfied with the handsome vote that was given me, expressing as it does in my judgment, the full measure of anything I could have expected.⁷

Campbell’s age also placed him among the men who were subject to being drafted into military duty under the conscription act passed in March of 1863, which required the enrollment of male citizens between the ages of twenty and thirty-five and unmarried males ages thirty-six to forty-five, with few exceptions. In October 1863, Campbell and his brothers Gus and Thomas were added to the provost marshal’s consolidated list of those who were subject to military conscription from Wheeling’s congressional district.⁸ However, the conscription act included an exemption by substitution clause, providing that “any person drafted and notified to appear . . . may on or before the day fixed for his appearance, furnish an acceptable substitute to take his
place in the draft, or he may pay . . . such sum, not exceeding three hundred dollars . . . for the procuration of such substitute.”

Many argued the clause unfairly favored the rich at the expense of the poor. In some cities, most notably New York, the discontent turned to violence in riots protesting the act. Campbell dismissed such arguments, saying the trouble was caused by those who were “traitors at heart, but without the courage to join the rebel army.” He claimed the troublemakers had been “especially dishonest as to the $300 exemption, and have falsely and wickedly said that it favors the rich.” He told readers of the *Intelligencer* the “whole object and effect of that provision, as any man of sense can see, is to keep down the price of substitutes. If there had been no such provision the price of substitutes would have gone up to a thousand dollars or more, and so place exemption beyond the reach of any but the most wealthy.”

Campbell also deplored the rioters who sought to protest and hamper implementation of the law. “These demagogues know very well that the draft cannot be stopped unless the mob makes a successful revolution and destroys the government. . . . and that would cost those who should undertake it a great deal harder fighting than they are liable to in our armies.” Campbell said, “No sane man will resist the draft, unless he expects to destroy the government . . . rather than serve his country.”

Campbell’s perspective was relative to his own pecuniary position for the $300 exemption was within his means. He had no reason to resist the draft if he was called because he was assured he could bypass it with a $300 payment. In 1863 his reported income was $1,700, roughly the equivalent of $33,000 in 2015; on which he paid a three percent excise tax. In comparison, a private in the Union Army was paid less than $300
per year and iron and glass workers in Wheeling made about $1,000 per year for six days of hard physical labor each week.\textsuperscript{13}

Campbell’s income continued to rise during the war. Although his 1864 income was only slightly more than the previous year, by 1865 Campbell earned $5,743, or about $89,000 in 2015 dollars, and he claimed a gold watch and pianoforte on the tax assessor’s report; his taxes were $337, or the current equivalent of about $5,000. A year after the war ended, Campbell’s earnings had climbed to $11,390, equal in 2015 to more than $184,000. He paid tax of $869, or more than $14,000 in 2015 equivalent value.\textsuperscript{14}

During those years, part of Campbell’s income came from his position as postmaster. When he was first appointed to the position by President Abraham Lincoln, in 1861, the compensation was a commission based on the receipts of the assigned post office at the end of every quarter. In 1864 a postal reform act established a fixed salary scale for postmasters. Under the law, post offices were categorized into five classes, based on their volume, with class one facilities doing the largest amount of business. Wheeling’s post office was a class two operation, thereby Campbell’s salary was set at something between $2,000 and $3,000 beginning July 1, 1864.\textsuperscript{15} The exact amount was to be determined based on the receipts from the previous two years, so the amount he received was not significantly different than he had been receiving.

Campbell acknowledged that the “establishment of fixed salaries for postmasters, and other reforms in the management of the local offices, will effect a savings of several hundred thousand dollars yearly.”\textsuperscript{16} However, at about the same time the measure took effect, Campbell attempted to resign from the position. The Post Office Department refused to accept the letter of resignation he sent during the summer of 1864. When he
resubmitted his resignation in September, requesting to be relieved at the end of the expiring quarter, the Postmaster General replied with a request that Campbell name a suitable person as his successor. Campbell submitted the name of Theodore Gorrell, a young man who had worked at the post office for two years, and who Campbell said was “well known to our people. . . . He is unusually popular with all classes of people, on account of his highly frank and honorable character and his unpretending good sense.”

Gorrell had been nominated as a candidate for the state House of Delegates at about the same time, a nomination that Campbell supported. A postmaster appointment was not received by Gorrell until mid-October and at that time he was convinced by friends to leave his name on the ballot for legislative office. “The tickets containing my name had then been printed and distributed . . . [and] friends insisted that I could not withdraw without disadvantage to the Union cause, and that I should abide the result of the election. . . . Unfortunately for me, I was elected,” Gorrell told his fellow legislators as he spoke to the House in refutation of a charge made against him in the Wheeling Register.

Although Gorrell thought perhaps he could resign from the elected position in order to accept the postmaster appointment offered, he learned a new election could not be held without a great deal of expense to the state and loss of support from his friends. Therefore, Gorrell said he “declined [the postmastership] and sacrificed what to me was an important pecuniary consideration.”

The accusation that “Mr. Campbell wanted me in the legislature to vote for him for U.S. Senator refutes itself,” Gorrell said. “If I had become Post Master as he intended, I could not have occupied a seat in this body.”
Gorrell’s appointment to the postmaster position, dated September 24, 1864, in the official records, was never confirmed by the Senate, and on March 9, 1865, Campbell was reappointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, with the effect that he never actually left his postmaster position. He served as Wheeling’s postmaster until August 1866.21

Adding a small income beyond his postmaster’s salary, the Intelligencer had grown into a thriving “unconditional Union newspaper.” An 1864 ad for the publication claimed it had “no ‘ands’ or ‘ifs’ or ‘butts’ in its support of the Union cause. It advocates no compromise with rebels in arms short of their absolute submission to and recognition of the supreme authority of the Union over all the States.”22

But financial times were tough. Money was scarce and annual subscriptions often were not paid. In late 1864 a notice in the newspaper urged payment from those who “know that they are indebted to us for one and two years, and might send us the money at once. If our patrons do not pay up more promptly than they have been doing we will be compelled to suspend the publication of our paper.”23

The editors also announced an increase in price. “From and after this date (Oct. 13) our terms will be a $2 a year in advance, and $2.50 if not paid in advance.”24 The increased subscription price was required to defray the rising cost of paper. Before the war much of the nation’s paper was made of linen and cotton rags, and as cotton supply diminished, as a consequence of the war, the price of paper steadily rose higher. A process to make paper from wood fiber had been patented in 1854, but the machinery for converting wood into pulp was not introduced until two years after the war ended.25
Campbell explained to readers that it was “an unpleasant fact that since the great rise in paper, we can hardly make both ends meet.”

The “apprehended exorbitant advance in the price of newspaper” was one of the concerns for newspapermen who had formed the Western Associated Press in 1862. The group was modeled on the New York Associated Press, which was formed to lower the cost of acquiring news by sharing certain resources. However, by the time the western group met in Cincinnati in May 1864, the publishers involved had determined that by working together they could better address many industry concerns and advances. In addition to the price of paper, the meeting agenda included “difficulties with the New York Associated Press in regard to satisfactory dispatches, . . . difficulties with compositors, members of the Typographical Union, . . . the new method of type setting recently brought to considerable perfection in the East,” and inconsistency of subscription and advertising rates.

The Wheeling Intelligencer was one of more than a dozen newspapers that made up the group’s membership. The others were Chicago’s Times and Tribune; Cincinnati’s Gazette, Enquirer, and Commercial; in St. Louis, the Republican, the Democrat, and the Union; the Louisville Union and Press; Detroit’s Free Press, and Advertiser and Tribune; the Dayton Journal; and the Indianapolis Journal and Indianapolis Gazette.

Representatives of the Chicago papers could not attend the two-day meeting, so Campbell was called upon to stand in for Joseph Medill, editor of the Tribune, who was the organization’s secretary. A committee assigned to report on the situation involving paper costs informed members that “the manufacture of wood paper has not been sufficiently developed to justify any definite action on the part of publishers.” They
recommended a committee be appointed “to correspond on the subject, and when, in the opinion of that committee, important definite results may be attainable,” to report to the whole membership. Campbell was one of five members named to the permanent “committee upon improvements in the manufacture of paper.”

In other matters discussed, the suggestion was made that females should be employed as compositors “whenever it can be done conveniently.” However, the motion to make the idea an official resolution was postponed because of inability to agree. The members did agree, however, on a table of uniform minimum rates for advertising, scaled per the circulation size of the newspaper.

They also unanimously disapproved of the New York Associated Press’s attempt “to dictate as to the [telegraph] lines to be employed in the transmission of dispatches.” The topic arose in response to a New York AP agent’s dispatch directing editors to “not make the mistake of recognizing the opposition telegraph lines, which are undoubtedly built by speculators purely for speculative purposes.” The New York AP wanted only the Western Union or United States Military telegraph systems to be used for news transmission. Expressing that the “true interests of the whole press of the country are with the old and reliable lines,” the New York group threatened it would “instantly cut adrift from any paper, the proprietors of which contribute in any direct way to uphold or encourage the gambling cut throats who are concerned in the opposition lines.”

The western publishers decided that any effort made to “enforce the arbitrary rules adopted” upon any newspaper of the group would be retaliated. “A war upon any press,” they stated will be considered “as a war upon the whole, and a violation of those
principles which should govern the press and the public in dealing with the institutions such as telegraph companies.”

The situation catalyzed a determination by the publishers to “draw up . . . a plan for the permanent and thorough organization of the Western Associated Press.” Three men were chosen to prepare the plan and present it at the next meeting: Richard Smith, of the Cincinnati Gazette; Washington McClean, of the Cincinnati Enquirer, and A.W. Campbell, of the Wheeling Intelligencer. The organization they drafted was incorporated in 1865 in Michigan and adopted a code of by-laws that designated a share of capital stock could be purchased for $10, the ownership of which gave “all privileges and immunities of the Association,” to the newspaper holding the stock. It also gave the members strength in numbers, as all “matters of disagreement between any members of the Association and the New York Associated Press, or any telegraph company,” were to be referred to the Board of Directors. At the end of the century the Western Associated Press would break ties with the New York Associated Press and incorporate in Illinois under a new simplified name, Associated Press. At the turn of the century the regional organizations merged and the modern AP was incorporated.

Newspaper publication of the Intelligencer was only one part of the business of Campbell and McDermot. Although subscriptions to the newspaper were barely profitable, the proprietors made money in the printing business. They claimed to have “one of the largest and most thoroughly furnished Job Offices in the country.” The shop included “one of Taylor’s, one of Hoe’s, and one of Lawyer’s Steam Presses,” which were used for different types of printing. The Taylor press was used for gilding and stamping, using gold leaf; the ad boasted the ability to print in gold and colors.
assure customers of the firm’s reliability, the advertisement bragged “the printing for the State of West Virginia is done at this office.”

On the first day of 1866 McDermot retired from the business. He sold his interest to John Frew, who Campbell told readers had “been associated with the late proprietors from the beginning as the general manager of the job printing department of the paper. To hundreds of our patrons his name is familiar.”

Giving credit to Frew for his excellent work, Campbell boasted that “the business of the establishment is perhaps greater than the whole aggregate of printing done elsewhere in the State, and the facilities for doing a large business are, we may say, correspondingly unequaled.”

With Campbell’s income from the printing establishment and the post office surpassing his immediate needs, he began looking toward his financial future. In the mid-1860s he made two investments into Wheeling’s manufacturing industries that would prove to be fortuitous.

In 1864, Campbell made an investment that would lead to an additional career in a few years. On June 29 the Virginia Rolling Mills—an iron industry establishment—was sold “at public auction to the highest and best bidder . . . at the front door of the Court House . . . in Wheeling.” The selling price was $164,500 and the Intelligencer reported that it was “understood that Mr. Smith purchased for other parties . . . and that it is designed to establish a large iron company.”

Among those purchasers represented by Mr. Smith was Campbell, with an investment of $2,000, and his partner at the time, McDermot, in the amount of $1,000. Another of the investors, putting up $10,000, was Alonzo Loring, the former sheriff of
Ohio County who had been charged with treason at the beginning of the war; he was named secretary of the new company, a position that managed the daily affairs of the business. The organization was incorporated as the Benwood Iron Works with an authorized capital of $500,000.\textsuperscript{40}

A year later, Campbell joined his brother Gus, John McDermot, and five others to organize a new company, the Wheeling Hinge Factory. The group put up $50,000 capital to build the machinery and factory needed to produce T hinges and strap style hinges. The factory opened a year later and although having losses in the first two years, over the next decade it grew to be one of the leading providers in the nation for these types of hinges, as well as expanding into other forms of hardware.\textsuperscript{41}

While investing money wisely into the area’s industrial growth, Campbell also invested his time carefully into causes he believed to be of great value. He held knowledge and education in high esteem. Upon his death a memorial described him as a good neighbor, who desired “the development of the intellect of his fellows.” Noting that Campbell was deeply interested in the education of youth and young people, the speaker said Campbell “believed that education is a companion, which no misfortune can depress, no crime destroy, no enemy alienate, no despotism enslave.”\textsuperscript{42}

Proud of his own education, Campbell was honored to be elected to the Board of Trustees at his alma mater, Bethany College, in 1865.\textsuperscript{43} Elected at the age of thirty-two, he served the college for thirty-four years, until his death in 1899. During the first fourteen years, Campbell served alongside his father, A.W. Campbell Sr., who was the brother of the college’s founder, Bishop Alexander Campbell. James Garfield, who was elected president of the U.S. in 1880, was an honorary trustee from 1866 until his death.
in 1881. Archie’s cousin, Alexander Campbell Jr., was reinstated as a trustee in 1870, his earlier appointment having been interrupted by the Civil War. Alex and Archie had grown up as intimate friends and attended Bethany together, both graduating in 1852. Young Alex had been appointed to the board in 1855, but owned property, including slaves, in Mississippi when the war began and he enlisted as an officer in the Confederate Army. As was true of many families of the time, a chasm in loyalties caused a bitter estrangement between the two men that wasn’t mended until they came together at their patriarch’s home in 1866, upon the Bishop’s death. Alex’s sister, Decima Campbell Barclay, who was close to both Archie and her brother, wrote in her diary on the day of the funeral that she had “gotten Mr. [Alex] Campbell to speak & shake hands with Archie & I did the same as resentment could do no good & much evil & forgiveness [was] the example Father left us to follow.”

Another honor bestowed upon Archie Campbell in 1865 was his appointment by President Andrew Johnson as one of eighteen men who conducted the annual examination of West Point, the U.S. Military Academy, in June of that year. Each year the board of visitors went to West Point to watch and listen carefully to the proceedings of the examinations of the cadets. However, in 1865 the board “deemed themselves charged with other duties and among them the investigation of everything and everybody.” The superintendent of the academy and post commandant, General George Cullum, objected to this change from established procedure and expected all inquiries to be run through him and interviews to be conducted in his presence. The board contended, and communicated to Cullum, that it was “charged by . . . law, and by the instructions of the appointing power, to inquire into and report for the information of Congress,
‘the actual state of the discipline, instruction, police, administration, fiscal affairs and other concerns’ of the Military Academy.” As a result of this charge, the board refused to recognize any right of the superintendent to supervise testimony or require such to pass through his hands. 49

Cullum forwarded the board of visitors’ claim to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton seeking support. Stanton responded in the board’s favor, saying “the department has no authority over the Board of Visitors to direct its course of procedure for acquiring information upon the points concerning which it is required to make report.” 50

Campbell and the other members returned a report with twelve recommendations, many of which were directed toward raising the academic expectations for cadets. Among the recommended items were raising admission standards, instituting competitive examinations for admission, raising the minimum age of admission, and adding Spanish to the curriculum. The examiners also expressed their disgust at the cadets’ lack of proper grammar and the prevalence of swearing, stating that the academy’s expectations should be “in accordance with the practices of other colleges in the country.” 51

Closer to home, Campbell took renewed interest in his own community. He had been dedicated to providing opportunities for intellectual and cultural growth since moving to Wheeling in 1856. The columns of the Intelligencer included frequent references to and examples of literature, poetry, and promotion of public cultural events featuring speakers, music, and entertainers. In the late 1850s he had instigated a lecture series in the city and late in 1863 he again turned his attention to the benefits of bringing high-quality lecturers to Wheeling.
“The lecture season promises to be a brisk one all over the country,” he wrote. “Most of the Lyceums are promising themselves fat dividends . . . in the meantime what is our Wheeling Library Association doing or contemplating in the way of lectures?”

The Wheeling Library Association had been incorporated in 1859 as a “library and literary association . . . the object for which . . . is to maintain a library, and promote useful knowledge.” Books belonging to the defunct Wheeling Lyceum, through which Campbell had conducted the earlier lecture series, were turned over to the new organization. Stockholders in the association paid fifty dollars per share to become voting members, but anyone could become a subscribing member and use the library for a five dollar yearly fee. The proceeds were put toward operation and new acquisitions.

During the first years the organization continually trimmed expenses to make ends meet and at the 1862 annual meeting the president reported such grave financial difficulties the board had determined it was “impossible to maintain a library in our city” and recommended it be closed. Despite the lack of funds and recommendation it remained open with a determined group of directors vowing to gain additional support.

When Campbell wrote about the national lecture season in November 1863 he saw an opportunity for the struggling Wheeling Library Association. “They need funds as much as any concern of the kind in the country. Do they see their opportunity? . . . Washington Hall could be filled once a week during the winter months with the intelligence and wealth of the city, and an average profit of one hundred dollars per lecture could be realized by the Library Association.”

Someone on the association’s board of directors saw opportunity of another kind in Campbell’s editorial and the editor was named a director and secretary of the
organization a few months later, in May 1864. At that time the group had 162 stockholders and 150 yearly members. When the winter lecture season rolled around that year, the Library Association launched a series of “entertainments” to raise money, while providing the community with intellectual stimulation. Each event was heavily promoted through the *Intelligencer* in editorial columns and advertising. From one of the early lectures, given by humorist Alf Burnett, the association netted about $250, an amount that was equaled or surpassed at many of the upcoming events.

During the next season, Campbell published notice that “Hon. Schuyler Colfax, Esq., speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives is going to deliver a lecture before the Pittsburgh [sic] Library Association. . . . Our Library Association might, profitably to themselves, induce him to deliver the same address here. . . . Better correspond with the Association up there.”

Colfax had supported the passage of the West Virginia statehood bill by Congress in 1863 and had likely met with Campbell as the editor lobbied congressmen for passage of the bill. Rather than correspond with the Pittsburgh association, Campbell tapped into his network, as he so often did, writing directly to Colfax to propose a Wheeling lecture. Colfax responded promptly, closing his response to Campbell “with pleasant recollections of our former meetings.”

Colfax’s reply was hesitant to commit to the engagement. “I have been compelled to decline most of the lecture invitations received this fall, for absolute lack of time. . . . Yet I hate to say no to the people of West Virginia in which I have felt such a deep interest.” The Wheeling trip was squeezed into Colfax’s schedule on the only day he was available, the night after his Pittsburgh appearance. Campbell set about promoting
the event, referring to Colfax in one editorial piece as “a great friend and ally of West Virginia at the time of her admission. Our people are especially indebted to him.”

Campbell’s appeal to attendees featured many reasons to support the Wheeling Library Association.

We are happy to speak of the prospects of our City Library Association, an institution of which we should all be proud, and in which every man, woman and child in the city has a deep personal interest. During the last month the list of annual subscribers increased beyond any previous month in its history, and within a few days past a cargo of new and popular books has been received. Every citizen for the sake of his family, if not for himself, should be an annual subscriber. The price of subscription is the merest trifle, only five dollars and where is the man who loves to read, or who desires to cultivate a taste for reading in his family, who cannot pay that small sum? Some of our people who are able to pay seem not yet to have realized what a desirable institution the city library is. . . . All the late leading daily papers of the country are on file, easily accessible to every visitor, and, in addition, the principal monthly magazines and most popular weeklies are on the table, while the shelves are laden with almost any work of fact or fancy that any one [sic] could desire to read.

With Campbell’s involvement, the lectures continued successfully into the 1870s, helping to fund the library, which Campbell called “part and parcel of the good name of the city, and . . . the leading institution of elevation and refinement in Wheeling.” By 1877 the library held 5,281 books and check-out circulation was 10,330. However, times were changing and by 1880 the board of directors determined that “no plan thus far devised for maintaining a library by private contribution can be made to succeed.” They closed the library and the books and furniture were turned over to a group of trustees who were given the authority to transfer everything to any association that would agree to maintain a public library in the city. Agreeing that the “city very much needs a good library . . . and in view of the great number who will be benefitted by such an institution when properly conducted as a public library for the use of the whole people,”
the trustees agreed it was desirable to turn over the Wheeling Library Association’s property to the local Board of Education so they could form a public library. In 1882 state legislation was passed to provide for the establishment, maintenance, and support of a public library by the local Board of Education. That library, created from the remnants of the Wheeling Library Association Campbell and others worked for twenty years to maintain, was the forerunner of today’s Ohio County Public Library.

In promoting Colfax’s lecture in 1865, Campbell challenged his readers to support the library for the good of their children. “Do not hoard up dollars for your children to the exclusion of advantages far more beneficial to them than dollars,” he said. “Give them the benefits of an excellent institution like the library, by giving it your aid. Your children will remember you gratefully for it on many occasions through life. It is a duty every man owes to his family to afford them these advantages.” It was a challenge that had become especially relevant to his own life, as he and Annie celebrated the birth of a son, Richard Crawford Campbell, on January 2, 1865.

A few days after the birth Archie’s sister, Jane, who still lived with their parents in Bethany, wrote in response to his “long satisfactory note” in which he had provided details about the new family member. “From your description I can just see the boy,” Jane said. “I know all about him already. I love to think of him in your arms too. Beguiling you . . . many a time I will prophecy. . . . I think indeed from your description that young Richard will do no discredit to his families.”

Her mother said the baby’s looks “corresponds very much to your own appearance as a baby,” Jane wrote. If baby Richard continued to resemble his father, he would grow to be tall with fair skin. Archie stood five feet and ten inches tall, about five
inches above the average man at the time.\textsuperscript{69} He had an oval face, stark complexion, dark hair that grayed as he aged, and blue eyes.\textsuperscript{70}

Phebe Campbell, Archie’s mother, was pleased at the birth of a grandson. “I hasten to offer you my congratulations, also, for I suppose there is no one more desirous for your happiness than I am, or so it seems to me. . . . I do rejoice in the birth of this dear little one, it is at all events a present joy to you and . . . especially \textit{sic} that its mother is spared as a guardian angel to its helpless infancy.” She sent “many congratulations to Annie, many kisses to baby” and predicted the affect parenthood would have upon Campbell.

I feel my dear son, as though this (that is your babe) was sent as a precious, precious boon. Will it not teach you to understand more fully the solicitude of parents for their children? Perhaps you will learn to look more leniently upon the thousand actions of your mother about which you have so often wondered. Everything that concerns this child will be matter of interest to you, more than you could even have imagined. You will partake in all its little joys, and how deeply will you feel for all its [scorns], trifling though they may seem to others. They are not “trifles” to you.\textsuperscript{71}

Three months after Richard’s birth, on April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General U.S. Grant. It brought an end to the Civil War. Only ten days after the surrender, Francis Peirpoint, Campbell’s comrade in creating West Virginia, sent a telegram to Campbell and West Virginia Governor A.I. Boreman alerting them he would be leaving Alexandria in five days, where he had moved the Restored Government capital of Virginia, to travel to Richmond. He asked that they “make up a company of eight or ten from Wheeling,” to meet up and travel with him to the Confederate capital where he would take up residence as the governor of Virginia.\textsuperscript{72} Campbell met Peirpoint in Baltimore on May 24 to escort the governor to his new home,
where he received far less than a welcoming entrance from the defeated and distraught citizens. During the trip Campbell experienced the truth of his mother’s words, that everything of concern regarding his child, whom he nicknamed Coon Kat or Coonie for short, would be his concern.\footnote{Campbell’s life has been gradually shifting focus and with the end of the war he was released from his intense efforts to raise troops, provide war news, boost morale, and engender hope in West Virginians that their struggles would be worthwhile. Although he continued to be active in the Republican Party, notably being named a member of the Republican National Committee in 1864, he also dedicated his efforts more and more to the causes that would provide a better community for his new and growing family. A second child, Jessica Corneigle Campbell, referred to as Jessie, arrived on November 7, 1867. A year later Campbell gave up his editor’s position and his ownership of the \textit{Intelligencer}, selling the company he had built to John Frew, G.D. Hall, the editor who had blossomed under Campbell’s mentoring, and L.A. Hagans.\footnote{Campbell told readers the reasons were personal, but indicated he needed a break from the grind, alluding to the possibility that it might not be permanent. “After almost twelve years of close confinement and constant labor by day and night in this business, I am not unwilling for a season at least to be relieved from its wear and tear upon body and mind.”} \footnote{The new proprietors’ salutatory summed up the editor’s journalism career as he walked away from his first love to pursue the life he was creating with his new love, his family.}
It has happened to him to occupy the position . . . during a period when great and fundamental political changes were occurring. Through all those changes no man labored more constantly or with more singleness of purpose for the political and material welfare of the people with whom his lot had been cast, and to inculcate broad and generous principles respecting the dignity of labor and the equal rights of all men. His labors are inseparably connected with all that is notable in our West Virginia history since 1856; and it is not too much to say that the loyalty of the people of Northwestern Virginia at the time the rebellion broke out, as well as the subsequent reorganization of the State government and the formation of a separate State, were due very largely to the influence of Mr. Campbell’s pen as exercised through the columns of the Intelligencer. In his retirement now after a dozen most laborious years in the service of our people, in health very much broken by the severity of his labors, we are sure that Mr. Campbell carries with him the grateful remembrance of those whom he has been so largely instrumental in benefiting.76

Notes

Epigraph. “The Book,” Wheeling Intelligencer, January 23, 1865, CA. The Intelligencer often featured poetry on the last page, which was primarily filled with advertising. Although some of the poems were from known authors, many of those published were printed without attribution, such as “The Book,” which follows in full.

The Book.
I lent my love a book one day,
She brought it back, I laid it by;
’Twas little either had to say—
She was so strange and I so shy.

But yet we loved indifferent thing—
The sprouting buds, the birds in tune;
And Time stood still and wreathed his wings
With rosy links from June to June.

For her what task to dare or do?
What peril tempt? What hardships bear?
But with her, ah! She never knew
My heart and what was hidden there.

And she with me so cold and coy,
Seemed like a maid bereft of sense;
But in a crowd, all life and joy,
And full of blushful impudence.

She married! Well, a woman needs
A mate, her life and love to share—
And little cares sprung up like weeds,
And played around her elbow chair.

And years rolled by, but I, content,
Trimmed my one lamp, and kept it bright,
’Till Age’s touch my hair besprent
With rays and gleams of silver light.

And there it chanced I took the book,
Which she had read in days gone by,
And as I read, such passion shook
My soul, I needs must curse or cry.

For here and there her love was writ
In old, half faded pencil signs,
As if she yielded, bit by bit,
Her heart, in dots and under lines.

Ah! Silvered fool! too late you look!
I know it; let me here record
This maxim, *Lend no maid a book,*
*Unless you read it afterward!*

1. “Miss Annie Will Be at Home” March 13, 1860, AWC.
2. “Annie Crawford to A.W. Campbell,” March 19, 1860, AWC.
3. “Wedding Announcement: A.W. Campbell and Annie W. Crawford,” March 10, 1864, AWC. The officiant for the ceremony is noted in Campbell’s scrapbook in the same collection.
5. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. “Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for West Virginia, 1862-1866” (National Archives Microfilm Publication M795, n.d.), Records of the Internal Revenue Service, Record Group 58, The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); “Consumer Price Index Calculator Information” (Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis), accessed February 24, 2016, https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800. The Internal Revenue Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1862, with the intention of providing revenue to support the government and to pay interest on the public debt created by the Civil War.
14. “Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for West Virginia, 1862-1866.”
16. “Mr. Blair’s Management of the Post Office Department,” *Wheeling Intelligencer,* October 12, 1864, CA.
20. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
27. “Meeting of Western Newspaper Publishers in Cincinnati—Minutes of Their Proceedings,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 6, 1864, CA.
29. “Meeting of Western Newspaper Publishers in Cincinnati--Minutes of Their Proceedings.”
30. Ibid.
33. Williams’ Wheeling Directory.
35. Williams’ Wheeling Directory.
37. Ibid.
38. “Commissioners’ Sale,” Wheeling Intelligencer, June 17, 1864, CA.
40. Henry Dickerson Scott, Iron & Steel in Wheeling (Toledo: The Carlson Company, 1929), 38. See chapter five of this manuscript for more about Loring’s arrest.
41. Peter Boyd, History of Northern West Virginia Panhandle (Topeka: Historical Publishing Company, 1927), 236. Other original investors were Joseph Metcalf, Samuel Laughlin, David Wagener, Alex Robinson, and D.E. Donel. Later investors included Campbell’s father-in-law, Richard Crawford.
42. “Laid to Rest. The Funeral of the Late Archibald W. Campbell Occurs,” Wheeling Intelligencer, February 17, 1899, CA.
43. “Joseph Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” July 3, 1865, AWC.
45. Ibid., 69.
47. “E.M. Stanton to Henry W. Halleck,” Telegram, (May 27, 1865), AWC.
49. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. “The Lecture Season,” Wheeling Intelligencer, November 7, 1863, CA.
54. “The Lecture Season.”
55. “Wheeling Library Association,” Wheeling Intelligencer, May 10, 1864, CA. Campbell’s scrapbook includes a notice addressed to A.W. Campbell, Director, about a meeting of the directors of the Wheeling
Library Association in October 1865. See chapter three for Campbell’s role in the earlier lecture series in Wheeling.


The speaker, Alf Burnett, wrote Incidents of the War, Humorous, Pathetic, and Descriptive in 1863. An author and humorist, he enlisted with an Ohio regiment at the beginning of the Civil War and served with that group in West Virginia, after which he became a war correspondent for the Cincinnati newspapers, the Press, Times, and Commercial.

58. “Hon. Schuyler Colfax,” Wheeling Intelligencer, October 6, 1865, CA.
59. “Schuyler Colfax to A.W. Campbell,” October 28, 1865, AWC.
60. Ibid.
61. “Our City Library Association,” Wheeling Intelligencer, November 1, 1865, CA.
62. Ibid.
64. “Board of Education,” Wheeling Intelligencer, January 27, 1882, CA.
66. “Board of Education.”
67. “History of the Ohio County Public Library” (Ohio County Public Library), accessed February 28, 2016, http://www.ohiocountylibrary.org/about. Interestingly, Wheeling voters rejected a grant from Andrew Carnegie for a new library in 1904; instead the local Board of Education financed a new library to maintain operational independence.
68. “Our City Library Association.”
71. “Phebe and Jane Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” January 8, 1865, CPP.
72. “F.H. Peirpoint to A.I. Boreman and A.W. Campbell,” Telegram, (May 19, 1865), AWC.
73. “A.W. Campbell to Annie (Mamma) Campbell,” August 23, 1868, CPP.
75. Ibid.
76. “In Our Advertising Columns,” Wheeling Intelligencer, February 17, 1868, CA.
Chapter 9: 1868-1871—A Failed Candidate

For eight years the people have been, to a great extent, blinded and hurried on by passion and prejudice. We have reached that period when a change for better or worse must soon come.

–Spirit of Jefferson

“As you can see, I am afloat, sailing down the O-hi-o as the song goes,” A.W. Campbell wrote home to his wife Annie in August 1868 after leaving from a speaking engagement in Parkersburg, Wood County, via the steamboat Emma Graham. “I am now on my way to Point Pleasant, in Mason Co., where I am to speak on Tuesday. . . . I will write you again from Charleston.”

No longer tied to the post office or the rigors of publishing a daily newspaper, Campbell was able to spend even more time in party politics. After the state Republican convention in May, at which he was president, Campbell spent the 1868 election season on the stump, traveling the state to speak on behalf of the Republican Party and its candidates. During the canvass leading to the convention, he was disinclined to be one of those candidates. Throughout his life, Campbell often voiced his hesitancy to run for elected office, even though he was considered by many to be an excellent candidate for state office. He did promote himself, behind the scenes, for certain federal appointed offices, but seldom allowed his name to be included on a popular ballot. He felt most comfortable in a support role, using his talents to help others gain and succeed in office. With the power of the press no longer as directly at his disposal, he relied more heavily on his oratory skills and, as always, his network of friends.

Early in 1868 Campbell had been put forward as a potential candidate for governor. “There has been a warm and growing feeling among Mr. Campbell’s many
friends . . . in favor of making him our candidate,” Lyman Stedman, a Wheeling Republican, wrote in a letter published in the *Intelligencer*. The letter was accompanied by an article clipped from the Wellsburg *Herald* that stated Campbell “would certainly make a first class officer.” Stedman claimed, “Mr. Campbell deserves well of his party, which he served faithfully and effectively for nearly twelve years. . . . We believe we have none better fitted, more deserving, or more acceptable.”

But Campbell soundly rejected the suggestion. The *Washington Reporter* informed readers that Campbell had “published a card withdrawing his name from the canvass, and stated that he is not a candidate for that [governor] or any other office.” The view of the *Reporter’s* editor echoed Stedman’s: “The State will do well if she succeeds in getting as good a Governor as Mr. Campbell would have made.”

However, when the slate of Republican candidates was announced, his name appeared as a state elector at large and he committed his full support to the Republican campaign, including contributing his considerable oratory skills. In August a correspondent to the *Intelligencer* reported that a speech Campbell made in Morgantown “was elegant. He showed in a convincing manner that those now calling themselves Democrats had great reasons to try to throw oblivion over the past, for it was only necessary for an intelligent people to remember their record to refuse to place them in any position of trust or profit hereafter. . . . All who can ought to hear Mr. Campbell.”

This performance was repeated in a series of engagements in the largest cities of West Virginia, including Clarksburg, Morgantown, Point Pleasant, Fairmont, Charleston, Grafton, Shinnston, Parkersburg, Wellsburg, and Wheeling. A “mass meeting and procession at Fairmont. . . was the biggest thing of the kind that ever transpired there,” a
correspondent wrote to the *Intelligencer* in October. “At least five thousand people were there. . . . A.W. Campbell, presidential elector at large, was the principal speaker.”\(^5\)

Although the audiences were enthusiastic, Campbell exuded more confidence than he felt. In a letter to Annie he spoke about a spur-of-the-moment event at Grafton, made possible only because he missed his train connection there and had to lay over, saying he “felt that if ever I did get along well at a public meeting as a speaker, I did that evening.” He attributed his success there “in good part to the fact that I felt more unrestrained by the absence of those who were critical in their own information & abilities.”\(^6\)

Campbell also missed Annie and the children when he traveled. While “jogging along on the boat . . . quite leisurely,” he told Annie, his mind turned to his young son Richard, who was always excited to see the coal boats on the river. “I thought of his mamma & her children when we passed a little [nice] chicken coop of a boat . . . made of rough boards, in which I saw a woman, her little ones all living . . . in that tub, instead of in a nice house on high & dry land, such as Mamma, Coonie & Jessie live in. I wonder if that woman & her chicks are happier than Mamma with hers.” He reassured Annie his “intention is to get back within the 2 weeks spoken of when I left.”\(^7\)

After winning the election for elector at large, on November 30 Campbell was officially notified by Governor A.I. Boreman that he was expected to be at the governor’s office on December 2 to cast his presidential vote.\(^8\)

The election of 1868 signaled a shift in West Virginia politics, as the Republican Party dropped the Union Party title it had used in earlier campaigns. Not only the name of the party, but party politics itself, had changed in West Virginia with the war’s end. State
politics had originated in the division from Virginia and creation of a new state as much as in the occasion of the Civil War. United against secession and fueled by sectionalism in 1861, the party that led the new state in 1863 had been a coalition of Republicans, Democrats, and former Whigs, all of whom supported the Union. With the onset of Reconstruction, the state experienced an evolution of the Republican and Democratic parties as the fledgling state searched for identity and stability. After the war, the state’s Republican leaders adapted and extended proscriptions against threats of potential and real internal enemies in much the way they had done during division of the state from Virginia. Ex-Confederates were required to take an oath of loyalty and were mostly prevented from voting or holding office. The measures went so far as to propose a constitutional amendment that would remove the rights of citizenship from ex-Confederates. As earlier differences resurfaced and new differences over proscriptions and disfranchisement overshadowed the need for unity in crisis, the coalition crumbled. 9 Although still in power in the state, Campbell’s Republican Party was beginning to experience rising competition.

Just months after the election in 1868, the West Virginia legislature voted on a U.S. senator to fill the seat held by P.G Van Winkle, who refused to serve another term, Campbell’s name was prominent among several potential candidates. Most often discussed in the press, besides Campbell, were F.H. Peirpoint, Boreman, Chester Hubbard, and Daniel Polsey, all of whom were statehood leaders. The Washington correspondent of the St. Louis Democrat claimed “the popular candidate is A.W. Campbell . . . a man of not more than thirty-five years of age . . . an especially magnetic, sincere and searching gentleman, with a gentleman’s instincts and a Republican’s
Another supporter said it was “universally conceded that he is the peer, if not
the superior of any gentleman yet named . . . credited with superior talents, energy,
honesty,” and he hoped the legislature would “see we want a man to represent our young
State who has brains—one who will have influence with his fellow members—one who
is known outside the State, as well as in it.”

Despite multiple articles supporting Campbell, A.I. Boreman was named to the
senator’s seat when the legislature voted in February 1869. Campbell again had been
passed over for an office that many believed he rightfully deserved as a reward for his
service to the state, as well as for his ability. The Belmont Chronicle, published just
across the Ohio River from Wheeling, said of Campbell, “while he was engaged in the
labor that brought success, others received the honors and wore the laurels.”

In the state’s first election of senators, John Carlile had been thus rewarded.
Carlile had been instrumental in initiating the movement for West Virginia statehood, but
later abandoned the cause when the statehood bill came before the Senate. Many West
Virginians had since considered Carlile a traitor to the state, especially those Republicans
who had worked so hard to realize statehood. In fact, Carlile had abandoned the state
physically and moved his family to Maryland after the Senate debacle; he returned to
Clarksburg during the 1868 presidential campaign, publicly supporting U.S. Grant. The
Intelligencer said Carlile was “not even a voter in the State for lack of residence—who is
in short a Democratic ‘carpet-bagger’ from Maryland!”

So, Carlile’s nomination to the position of minister to Stockholm in April 1869,
made by President U.S. Grant, came while Campbell’s failure to be recognized with a
senate seat was still very fresh. When Grant took office on March 4, 1869, he quickly
followed the standing tradition of handing out patronage positions to individuals in those states that had helped attain the party’s victory. Grant made several nominations for foreign diplomats in April, including recognizing West Virginia’s electoral vote by nominating Carlile, an action that had to be confirmed by the Senate to become effective.

When news of the nomination broke in West Virginia, there was an outcry throughout the Republican press of the state. The Point Pleasant *Weekly Register* explained that affiliating Carlile with West Virginia was “where the shoe pinches. Carlisle [sic] long ago deserted West Virginia and was about the same time, summarily repudiated in this State as not being in any way a representative of the loyal sentiment of it.”¹⁴ The Republican papers were of one opinion with the exception of the Clarksburg *Telegraph*, which had once been edited by Carlile and owned by his former business partner, Robert Northcott.¹⁵ The *Intelligencer* explained that if the nomination had been conferred on Carlile’s “own merits, we should not have dissented; but when he [Grant] appoints him as a representative of West Virginia Republicanism to the exclusion of men who are such truly, then we respectfully protest . . . a gross piece of injustice and a libel on our people.”¹⁶ The names of Campbell, F.H. Peirpoint, and C.D. Hubbard were suggested as appropriate nominees.

Granville Hall wrote to Senator Charles Sumner, chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations, asking that the senator prevent Carlile’s confirmation, saying the appointment met “the universal disapprobation of our Republican people. His appointment causes indignation. His confirmation would create disgust . . . [and] be an outrage on the Republicans of the state.”¹⁷
When the Senate considered Carlile’s appointment, it was neither confirmed nor rejected. The Point Pleasant *Weekly Register* reported: “By some means, whether fair or not . . . Carlile’s nomination was confirmed by the Senate just before adjournment; this vote was afterwards reconsidered and Carlile, a man without any decided political convictions was left among the ‘outs.’”\(^{18}\) Congress adjourned with the questionable nomination left in a state of uncertainty.

Meanwhile, Campbell and his friends had gone to work to convince President U.S. Grant that Campbell should be nominated in the event of Carlile’s rejection by the Senate, an event they felt very certain would happen with the help of key politicians in the Senate. John Allison, register of the Treasury, suggested to West Virginia senator and former governor, A.I. Boreman, that Campbell would be ideal for the position, then wrote “as strong a letter as I knew how to write” in support of Campbell’s nomination and sent it to Grant’s secretary of state, Hamilton Fish.\(^{19}\)

A string of recommendation letters, solicited by Campbell and his friends, began to flow to Grant. William McKennan, a relative of Mrs. Grant and a Washington, Pennsylvania, friend of Campbell’s, wrote that “measuring him [Campbell] by the severest standard of intellectual and moral fitness . . . his appointment will reflect credit upon the administration.”\(^{20}\) Union Army Major General William H. Powell appealed to Grant’s military background; writing “in behalf of the soldier sentiment” of West Virginia he assured the president that Campbell’s appointment “will give greater satisfaction to the Union people of West Va than any other apt that could be made from the State.”\(^{21}\) Former Post Master General William Dennison, who was governor of Ohio
when the war began, told the president, “I relied on him, chiefly, in all political matters in West Virginia.”

Within a month of the first efforts, Campbell wrote to Peirpoint regarding the support he had been given to date. “The documents on file now are as follows: Genl [Isaac] Duval, C.D. Hubbard, Jno. A. Bingham, Genl [James] Garfield, Genl [Thomas] Harris, Saml Galloway, and a letter signed by a number of our leading people here; also one from Jos. R. Kelly, one of the Editors of the Washington Reporter & once Speaker of the Pa House of Reps.” Campbell also agreed with Peirpoint that “it would be better to have a good man on the ground,” saying that ‘Chester Hubbard has given a partial promise to that effect, so a friend tells me.”

Peirpoint responded to Campbell by saying he would write to the president immediately, but informed Campbell he “did not mention the matter in N. York,” as he had intended to do because he “feared I might tumble upon some applicant, and stimulate him and give notoriety to the matter which might prove worse than all the influence I would get.” Peirpoint was optimistic, believing the letters in support of Campbell were “of such a character and coming from such a source, that if the place is open, and you have a man in the person of Mr. Hubbard on the ground you must succeed.”

When S.S. Fleming, former speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates, had written to Joseph McWhorter, former West Virginia legislator and state auditor, asking for his support of Campbell’s nomination, he claimed that if the president were “personally acquainted with Mr. Campbell he would need no assistance.” Fleming encouraged McWhorter to rally Campbell’s friends in Wheeling to actively support his
appointment because Campbell’s “extreme modesty will not allow him to present his own cause.”

That was not completely true. While Campbell didn’t promote himself directly to the president, he was fully aware of and orchestrating many parts of the campaign for his own appointment, requesting testimony from more powerful and better-positioned supporters to present the case on his behalf.

On May 26 Campbell provided an update to Peirpoint “in regard to the Stockholm mission,” saying “Hubbard & [Waitman] Willey went on to see about it & had an interview with the President & also with Sec Fish.” Hubbard told Campbell the president “seems reluctant to give up Carlile & as it would seem, has not abandoned the idea of sending him.” According to Hubbard and Willey, the president was unhappy with the way the Senate had handled the nomination; “they should either of [sic] confirmed or rejected him & not left it for him, the President, to place a stigma on him,” Campbell was told. The list of those who had sent letters of support was updated to include Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio, West Virginia Governor William Stevenson, and James McGrew, U.S. congressman representing West Virginia.

Thanking Peirpoint for his “prompt & unsolicited” kindness, Campbell told the former governor that “the whole affair has afforded such audience of good feeling on my behalf as inclines me to forget in some measure, at least, any feeling of disappointment.” Campbell was correct, in the end the effort would lead to disappointment. Just days later Grant nominated Christopher C. Andrews, the Senate confirmed the appointment, and Andrews received his credentials in July. Campbell and West Virginia Republicans had been passed over for the coveted position.
Before the year ended, Campbell begrudgingly agreed to be a candidate for elected office again, running for a seat in the state House of Delegates. When the Republican Ohio County convention met in early October to name the party’s candidates, Campbell suspected his name might be placed in nomination. “From what has been said on the subject, I think it possible that my name may be mentioned in the Convention to-day [sic] as a nominee for the house of delegates,” he wrote in a letter given to fellow Republican John Bishop. “In case it is, please withdraw it, and while expressing my acknowledgements to my friends disposed to thus compliment me, say that I am not a candidate for the position.”

Bishop read Campbell’s letter to the convention attendees, telling them “it was that gentleman’s wish that he should not be nominated.” Similarly, when Hubbard was nominated for the house, “he begged that his name might be withdrawn,” expressing he had been “in public service a good while, and thought he could very properly be excused.”

The Intelligencer reported that, “while it might be inferred from Mr. Hubbard’s remarks in the Convention, and from Mr. Campbell’s letter, that there was some doubt whether they would accept the nomination, we are happy to be able to say that both have yielded to the solicitation of their friends.” Of the six nominees, only William North received more votes from the conventioneers than Campbell. Hubbard filled the third available position on the Republican ticket.

The Intelligencer claimed the election was an important one for the county. “If Ohio county [sic] would protect her interests . . . she must send men of . . . ability and
experience. Wheeling has very important interests to be affected by the legislation of the coming winter.”

One of those interests was the cornerstone of the platform adopted by the convention, a stance the Washington *Reporter* referred to “as the ‘let up’ platform viz: the repeal of the disfranchising and disabling acts.” Campbell, Hubbard, and North ran their campaign for the House on a platform that favored “prompt steps by our next Legislature towards . . . process of repeal” of test oaths required of ex-Confederates. Former rebels were mandated to declare their loyalty via these oaths before they could register to vote, file a lawsuit, or work as lawyers or schoolteachers.

The Democrats agreed that disfranchisement needed to end. “We now, and ever have believed, that the disfranchising of any portion of our citizens is a violation of their vested rights, and against the interest of the State, and are consequently disposed to favor the ‘New Movement’ which has been inaugurated by our Radical friends,” the Weston *Democrat* published. However, the Democrats disagreed with the slow procedural process Campbell and his colleagues’ proposed, demanding immediate abolishment.

Another plank in the Republican platform called for an end to executive appointment of the officers who ran voter registration, a process that had become ripe with corruption in many areas, with politically appointed registrars preventing even those who had taken an oath from voting. Instead the Republicans proposed one registry officer would be elected by popular vote in each county. Acknowledging that these acts of proscription had once served a purpose, the Republicans held they were no longer required for “the protection of society . . . therefore, no rigor, or semblance of persecution
is excusable after the public safety is reasonably assured. . . . We can afford to inaugurate the necessary steps for discontinuing everything known as war legislation.”

A published “address to the Republican voters of Ohio County,” that became known as the “let up” address, was signed by 134 local members of the party and set forth an explanation for the change to their platform.

A decided change has been, and is now, going on in public opinion all over the country, in respect to the permanent disfranchisement of the great mass of those who stand implicated in the rebellion. . . . It is . . . near certain as anything in the future can be, that the day of complete enfranchisement for all men, white and black, is close at hand. This is the manifest tendency of the times and very soon we must all accept the fact, willingly or otherwise.

The statement was made in light of the Congress’s passage, in February, of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which would prohibit the federal and state governments from denying a citizen the right to vote “on account of that citizen’s race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Campbell and others thought ex-Confederates would be viewed in a similar light to former slaves, that having waged rebellion against the Union would be no reason to withhold their right to vote.

Although the amendment was yet to be agreed to by the states, party leaders foresaw likely ratification and the implications that could have for their party. The statement they made was direct and honest about the reason for adopting the platform. “If we desire and expect to maintain the ascendancy of the political organization to which we belong” the signed address stated, the party would be required to “adopt a party policy in harmony with this prevailing tendency of the times.” The members also recognized that continuance of the restrictions would become a detriment to the progress of the new state.

We believe that a gradually liberalized policy like this is not only just and right of itself, but in keeping with the grand record of patriotism and statesmanship made
by the republican party [sic] throughout a contest unparalleled for its extent and bitterness. . . . We cannot afford to keep a large body of our fellow-citizens perpetually disfranchised, and thereby perpetually disaffected. Ostracism within the State tends to bring about emigration from the State. Permanent disfranchisement is not in keeping with a form of government like ours; and were its continuance possible by the will of the majority, which it is not, the end could not be other than disastrous to the public welfare.36

This sentiment wasn’t shared statewide in the Republican Party. On the day of the election, the Intelligencer wrote, “We are aware that neither party is altogether united. Some of our Republican friends do not altogether approve the declaration of principles on which our candidates stand, and while some will yield their preference for the sake of general harmony some may decline to vote.”

Knowing fragmentation could lead to losses for the Republican candidates, the newspaper worked to shore up any costly breaks in party solidarity. “It is very rare if not impossible to do anything in politics which will fully meet the views of all. But those who agree in the main, will be wise not to let minor matters of sentiment override matters of general principle where the two seem to conflict.” Urging Republicans to vote with the party, the editors said they felt “confident the Republican ticket offers them a choice nearer their standard than that of the opposite party.”37

But bitterness remained among the disfranchised ex-Confederates and it was directed at the established Republican leaders. The Register, as quoted in the Intelligencer, expressed the opposition view. “Every proscribed West Virginian, whether socially and politically degraded at home or exiled in poverty by the damnable measures which Radicalism has enacted here, is a living reminder of the conduct and deserts of such men as A.W. Campbell and Chester D. Hubbard. Let them not be mistaken. Democrats do not forget.”38
The Republicans’ blatant political motivation for removing the restraints disgruntled the Democrats. “We must regret that the . . . movement can find no higher argument for its [repeal’s] success than its political expediency. . . . They ask no assistance from Democrats, but upon the contrary, give them express notice that they, (the radicals) have instituted this movement to reform and purify their own party, (God knows it needs it.)” 39

The *Intelligencer* also pointed out another, more immediate, threat to Wheeling and Ohio County that required strong representatives, regardless of party, in the state legislature. “An effort will be made, and there is every prospect that it will be successful, to undo the location of the Capital made last winter and either put it somewhere else or leave it here for a term of years.” 40 Wheeling had been the center of government since the state’s inception, but as the political power within the state became more disbursed geographically and by political party, other cities wanted to contend to be the seat of power.

Looming even larger, the next legislature would likely face the results of Virginia resuming her full place in the Union, following Reconstruction. The *Intelligencer* predicted that one of the first things to engage the attention of the Virginia legislature was “a settlement between the two Virginias. . . . Our own Legislature . . . will be officially requested to take steps for an adjustment of the debt.” 41 When Virginia had seceded from the Union, the state had owed millions of dollars in debt that had been spent on internal improvements, primarily in the eastern part of the state. West Virginia’s constitution committed to paying a fair share of that debt, but there was no agreement on what a fair share might be nor a definite figure on the amount of the debt at the date of separation.
The *Intelligencer* reminded voters of the magnitude of debt and the possible consequences to West Virginia and especially to Ohio County.

We remind our readers that the whole debt cannot now be far from fifty millions and cannot possibly be reduced below thirty millions—probably not below thirty-five or forty millions—by the sale of the public works in Virginia, and that Virginia will undertake to fasten one-third of this on West Virginia. . . . The holders of this vast indebtedness will all be interested in making us responsible for as much of the debt as they can. . . . Whatever share of that immense debt has to be paid by this State, must be paid by the property of the State—by houses and lots, lands, money and stocks. Ohio county [*sic*] holds more taxable wealth than any other county in the State. She has more to dread and suffer, therefore, from the pressure of taxation that must ensue if we pay any part of this debt.42

The newspaper went on to connect the impending taxation to the upcoming election. “We must commit this matter to our very best men. They must have a knowledge of all the steps that have been taken here since 1861 so as to fully understand the basis of such a settlement as West Virginia will demand,” the editors explained.

“They must be men of mental force, of practical business discernment, and of moral firmness to resist the arguments too often used to influence action where great interests are at stake. . . . This county must protect herself . . . and if we fail to do it, out of small party rivalries it may prove a misfortune that cannot afterwards be retrieved.”43

When the votes were counted, all three of the Wheeling Republicans had lost. Conceding defeat to the Democrats, editors of the *Intelligencer* admitted the editor at their rival publication, the *Register*, was “fairly entitled to a crow this morning.”44

The *Intelligencer* referred to the election results “with feeling of reluctance. They are a very unpleasant topic. It was an extremely disagreeable election.”45 Defeated in a bid for political office for the third time in one year, Campbell likely concurred. But a lack of political office didn’t diminish Campbell’s activity in the political ranks.
When President U.S. Grant traveled to Wheeling during the 1869 campaign, on his way from Pennsylvania to Washington, Campbell was front and center among the men of the city who welcomed the presidential party, including Grant’s wife and children. He escorted the president into the city in a fine barouche carriage, introduced state officials to the president, and sat at the head of the table next to Grant during dinner. Later Campbell escorted Grant to the railroad station, where together they boarded the “elegant saloon car” of B&O Railroad President John Garrett, which was provided for the presidential party, and Campbell was among the few dignitaries who accompanied Grant in his rail journey as far as Benwood, about five miles from Wheeling.46

As demonstrated by the Grant visit and his work during the statehood movement, Campbell was a better statesman than a politician, his political service drawing upon his personal relationships and specific areas of knowledge, rather than his ability to be popularly elected to an office. This was certainly true in 1871 when Campbell was appointed by West Virginia Governor John Jacob, as one of three debt commissioners assigned to help determine each state’s responsibility for the debt owed prior to the 1861 secession of Virginia. The Intelligencer had been correct in its assertion during the campaign of 1869, after Virginia had been fully reinstated into the Union, the legislature of that state had taken up questions regarding the separation of West Virginia.

One of the first questions that arose between the states was in regard to Berkeley and Jefferson counties, in the far eastern panhandle of West Virginia. Virginia claimed the two counties, which had been added near the end of West Virginia’s statehood process and were officially transferred to West Virginia in 1866 by an act of Congress, belonged to Virginia because in 1865 that state had withdrawn its consent for the counties
to separate. The case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1867 and in the same year a resolution by the West Virginia legislature declared the people of the state were opposed to reunion with Virginia and directed the governor to appoint three commissioners, as soon as the court case was settled, to meet with commissioners of Virginia on the matter of adjusting the debt as provided in the West Virginia constitution.\textsuperscript{47}

The Supreme Court decision, in March 1871, upheld West Virginia’s claim that the two counties had chosen to join the new state as provided in the original statehood bill and were legally part of West Virginia.\textsuperscript{48} Additionally, the case effectively provided \textit{de facto} recognition of the state of West Virginia, quieting ongoing claims that formation of the state had not been constitutional.\textsuperscript{49}

Since the debt calculation took into consideration the amount of land and assets belonging to each state, the case caused a delay of any settlement concerning the amount of debt for which each was responsible. When the western counties of Virginia had opposed secession and separated from the eastern counties at the beginning of the Civil War, the Virginia debt was nearly $34 million.\textsuperscript{50} That debt originally had been incurred for internal improvements before 1861, nearly all of which had been made in the eastern counties of the state, but in West Virginia’s statehood movement the founders acknowledged the new state should take responsibility for an equitable proportion of the debt afforded the counties of West Virginia. By 1871, with interest accrued, the debt had climbed to more than $45 million.\textsuperscript{51}

With a decision on the Supreme Court case imminent, Governor Jacob appointed three commissioners in February 1871—Campbell, John J. Jackson of Parkersburg, and
Jonathan Bennett of Weston—to treat with Virginia commissioners in order to reach a settlement on the debt. The West Virginia commissioners gathered in Parkersburg on August 9 to organize a plan on how to proceed.52 During that session they wrote a letter to Virginia Governor Gilbert Walker identifying their purpose and asking when, or if, Virginia would appoint commissioners with whom they would work.53

On September 7 Walker replied that commissioners for Virginia had been appointed in 1870 and notice sent to the governor of West Virginia at that time, but no response had been received and therefore in February 1871 the Virginia legislature authorized the governor to “tender to the state of West Virginia an arbitration of all matters touching a full and fair apportionment.” That arbitration superseded the 1870 commission, the governor said, therefore he refused to name commissioners and would agree only to the arbitration process. The West Virginia commissioners determined to “take substantially the same steps after the receipt of Governor Walker’s letter . . . as we would have taken had we expected to meet Commissioners representing Virginia, viz.: to go to Richmond and endeavor to gather the information expected and required under the terms of our appointment.”

The group traveled to Richmond in early November and examined documents that were available to them at the Capitol, and realizing they needed more explicit information, requested specific information from the second auditor of Virginia, Asa Rogers, who responded that “to answer the questions propounded would involve an amount of labor which we could not bestow on the subject.”54 Although the commissioners offered the services of a qualified clerk to minimize the office’s labor, their request for information was refused.
Desiring to complete their assignment, the group of commissioners met on December 12 and, using what information they had obtained, produced a report in which the results “must necessarily be only proximate in their character, inasmuch as our sources of information were limited.” The group’s conclusion was that West Virginia owed less than $1 million to the parent state.55

Campbell and the other commissioners were not the last to fail in answering the debt question. The ongoing struggle went through various iterations, all ending without resolution, until 1915, when the Supreme Court rendered a judgment in favor of Virginia. West Virginia owed just over $4 million, plus interest since 1861, for a total of nearly $12.4 million.56

Campbell had not been used to failing at anything he had attempted. His repeated lack of political success as a candidate was undoubtedly difficult to accept and the disappointing debt commission, though not his fault, was likely disheartening.

When the Washington Reporter again mentioned his name in association with a gubernatorial bid in 1870, he was described as a leader who had “fought slavery and secession with the power of a giant.” Although a different kind of soldier, like many of his military counterparts Campbell had thrived in the crisis-filled atmosphere that encompassed the Civil War and early reconstruction. Similarly, he was expected by many to receive rewards for his heroism, but the prize of political office eluded him.

Not unlike military soldiers who returned from the battlegrounds, Campbell experienced a readjustment that resembled Rebecca Harding Davis’s description in her essay titled “The Civil War” in Bits of Gossip.
“Another singular feature of the war, which I think nobody has described, was the hopeless confusion which followed its close,” she wrote. “When Johnny came marching home again he was a very disorganized member of society, and hard to deal with. . . . The social complications of the readjustment were endless and droll.”

Campbell’s readjustment included not only the changes wrought by the aftermath of war, but those he, himself, had initiated. By becoming a family man, selling the Intelligencer, and investing his money, Campbell had redirected his path immeasurably since the final years of the war. Even though he had not been successful in obtaining political rewards of office for his earlier efforts he still held significant political clout within his party, had gained considerable wealth, was a well-known speaker and community leader, doted on his two small children, and was happily married.

Then, on December 31, 1871, his life underwent a sudden, unexpected alteration. Campbell’s beloved Annie passed away, leaving the widower with a nearly seven-year-old son and a four-year-old daughter.

Notes

1. “A.W. Campbell to Annie (Mamma) Campbell,” August 23, 1868, CPP.
4. “A.W. Campbell at Fairmont,” Wheeling Intelligencer, August 26, 1868. CA.
5. “Grand Meeting at Fairmont,” Wheeling Intelligencer, October 22, 1868. CA.
6. “A.W. Campbell to Annie (Mamma) Campbell.”
7. Ibid.
8. “A.I. Boreman to A.W. Campbell,” November 30, 1868, AWC.
9. Andrew L. Slapp, ed., Reconstructing Appalachia, The Civil War’s Aftermath (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 212. Although current usage prefers the word disenfranchise, the author has elected to use the term used during the period of study, disfranchise.
12. “Mr. Campbell,” Wheeling Intelligencer, January 19, 1869. CA.
15. “Republican West Virginia Exchanges,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, April 26, 1869. CA.
16. “A Political Lesson.”
17. “Granville D. Hall to Charles Sumner,” April 10, 1869, Granville Davison Hall (1837-1934) Papers. WVRHC.
18. “Gratifying,” *Weekly Register*, May 6, 1869. NBAHN.
19. “John Allison to A.W. Campbell,” April 5, 1869, CPP.
20. “W. McKennan to U.S. Grant,” May 7, 1869, CPP.
21. “W.H. Power to U.S. Grant,” May 8, 1869, CPP. Powell was presented the Medal of Honor in 1890 for his service in a Civil War battle in which he and twenty men charged and captured 500 Confederates without any losses.
22. “William Dennison to U.S. Grant,” May 10, 1869, CPP.
23. “A.W. Campbell to F.H. Peirpoint,” May 12, 1869, CPP.
24. “F.H. Peirpoint to A.W. Campbell,” May 13, 1869, CPP.
25. “S.S. Fleming to J. McWhorter,” May 18, 1869, CPP.
26. “A.W. Campbell to F.H. Peirpoint,” May 26, 1869, CPP.
27. “The Convention, the Ticket and the Platform,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 11, 1869. CA.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
32. “In Another Column,” *Weston Democrat*, November 1, 1869.
33. “Address to the Republican Voters of Ohio County,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, September 1, 1869. CA.
34. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
38. “Style of Argument,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 26, 1869. CA.
39. “In Another Column.”
40. “The Convention, the Ticket and the Platform.”
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. “The Results,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 29, 1869. CA.
45. Ibid.
46. “President Grant in Wheeling,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, September 22, 1869. CA.
52. “State Debt Commission,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, August 7, 1871, CA.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
Chapter 10: 1872-1882—New Life, New Wife

First it is dress suit, then a lover’s suit, and then marriage; after which comes the lawyer’s suit, and proceedings wind up with a suit for divorce.
—Wheeling Intelligencer

In the first months of 1871 a period of business expansion began across the nation. In Wheeling “everything seemed to prosper” as “iron and nail mills were enlarging their capacity to the utmost extent of their capital.” Wheeling was known as a center of the iron industry, particularly cut nails, and A.W. Campbell claimed the town and its surrounding areas “constitute the largest Nail market in the world.”

Campbell’s investments in 1865 began to pay off handsomely and, after the death of Annie on New Year’s Eve in 1871, one of those initial purchases provided a new career path for the former editor. Although his destiny remained tied to the Intelligencer, his investments inducted Campbell into the era of economic boom and capitalistic wealth that would become known as the Gilded Age. Already well known and politically powerful in the city and state, Campbell enjoyed new industrial ties that provided another powerful and lucrative position heightening his stature in Wheeling society. Although not nearly as wealthy as the era’s famous captains of industry, still Campbell lived a “golden existence” typical of men of means in the Gilded Age. Known for greed, corruption, inequality, and other social problems, the era was one where every man was a potential millionaire, and Americans who achieved wealth often lived a life characterized by a shiny, glittering surface which masked the problems underlying the gilded exterior. Campbell’s life wasn’t exempt from the norms of the times in business and politics, but the glitter and problems in his life were personified in his second wife, a beautiful,
accomplished younger woman. Before winning her hand, he transformed himself to become a respected businessman in manufactures.

That transformation began shortly after Annie’s death. In January of 1872 Campbell was re-elected as a director of Benwood Iron Works, in which he and others had invested in 1865. Later in the same month he was made president of the company. In describing his responsibilities in that position, he said he was “not . . . actively connected with its [the mill’s] management, my principal duty being to preside at meetings of its board of directors and attest its official acts.”

In February the company announced “having a nice office fitted up in the second story of their warehouse near the foot of Quincy Street,” less than a block from the Intelligencer office. The new executive space, which would be occupied by the president, secretary, and bookkeepers, was “about the most pleasant room of the kind in the city—large, well furnished, lighted and ventilated.” Benwood was one of several large companies that manufactured iron in and around Wheeling.

“The growth of this business, as indeed of all the manufactures of Wheeling, is due to the abundance of cheap fuel (stone coal) in the hills around the city, and to the facilities for reaching all the markets of the country, either by rail or water, at low rates for freight,” Campbell wrote a few years later, in the 1876 book Resources of West Virginia. The iron was produced “on the spot” at the area’s nine blast furnaces for manufacturing iron and was “immediately in market, without cost for transportation.”

In the years 1871 to 1873 the mills around Wheeling produced almost three million kegs of nails, about one-fourth of all the nails made in the United States during that period. But the city of more than 30,000 residents also was well known for
producing glass and “Wheeling Stogies” cigars, with about fifty factories dedicated to making the latter item. In 1872, Wheeling and the surrounding area produced thirty-six million cigars.\(^\text{10}\)

Campbell also held director positions on the boards of the Wheeling Hinge Company, First National Bank of Wheeling, and National Insurance Company of Wheeling.\(^\text{11}\) He continued to be active in making improvements for the Wheeling community, as well. For example, in 1872 he served as one of five Wheeling delegates to the Cincinnati Convention for Improvement of the Ohio River, where a group gathered to discuss how the river could be made more navigable.\(^\text{12}\) Relative to Wheeling, and especially the iron business, this was a priority for continued growth. “If capitalists could be assured of uninterrupted navigation of the river nine months in the year, there is scarcely a doubt but that our unsurpassed manufacturing advantages would be speedily brought into requisition,” the \textit{Intelligencer} declared.\(^\text{13}\)

At the convention, nearly one hundred attendees discussed what could be done to improve year-round navigation, as floods, ice and dry summers often caused periodic interruptions to usability of the river. The idea to build a series of dams the length of the river to help control the level of water was raised and discussed, but the cost seemed prohibitive, being estimated at as much as $60 million.\(^\text{14}\) A permanent commission was formed to continue working through Congress to find ways in which to accomplish and finance the needed improvements.

Another improvement in which Campbell invested was the Wheeling and Benwood Street Railway Company, which was incorporated in early 1872 to provide transportation between and through the two cities via cars that were pulled by horses.
along rail tracks. It was a wise investment for Campbell, as not only did it provide transportation that allowed him and other employees of businesses to move around more efficiently, but in 1874 the stock paid Campbell a five percent dividend. In 1875 he was elected to the board of directors.

Although Campbell’s acumen was in demand, the iron business was of growing interest to him. In the spring of 1869 Campbell traveled south with S.H. Woodward, a Wheeling ironmaster. They spent a month traveling by mule through Tennessee and Alabama, much of which was wild and forested area, and returned “looking bronzed and vigorous.” The two men had taken the journey to check on the validity of a story Woodward overheard from two federal soldiers who mentioned they had noticed deposits of iron ore, coal, and limestone within a few miles of one another in the northern part of Alabama while there in a Civil War campaign. Knowing the importance of these three essentials of iron manufacture, Woodward determined to learn more about Alabama.

Although Campbell no longer had an ownership stake in the Intelligencer, he still enjoyed writing and was happy to oblige the editors when requested to provide correspondence about the men’s adventures. Campbell mixed tales of the people they met with descriptions of the land, the climate, and the geography. “I confess to a kind of enchantment of imagination as I stood upon a mountain or iron ore that ran northeast and southwest a hundred miles,” he wrote. “There is metal enough to last all the furnaces of the country any length of time you please. . . . If I had time and space I would try to go more into particulars concerning this mineral wealth. But perhaps such technicalities would interest only a portion of your readers.” 

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The evidence convinced Woodward, who quickly bought 550 acres near Shelby, Alabama—about thirty-five miles south of Birmingham—spent $30,000 on other coal and ore lands, and purchased a 2,000-acre tract near Tuscaloosa. The property later would become the nucleus of one of the nation’s largest pig iron producers, Woodward Iron Company, founded by Woodward’s son, J.H. Woodward.21 Campbell’s son Richard would work at the Alabama mill in the late 1880s when it opened.22

Sending correspondence to the *Intelligencer* during his travels became standard practice. If Campbell visited an area for an extended period, readers of the *Intelligencer* were often invited to join him through his colorful descriptions and humorous tales sent back to and printed in the newspaper.

Tales about Campbell and his intentions or lack thereof continued, as well. Seemingly with every election someone brought up his name as a candidate or appointee for some office and accolades, as well as denunciations, for the man would flash into the pages of the press for a short period. In January 1873 correspondents suggested that Campbell had been posturing for a Cabinet position in President Grant’s administration, claiming he was working behind the scenes to have someone suggest such an appointment to the president.

Campbell’s supporters thought him deserving. One letter referred to Campbell as “not merely the Daniel Boone of Republican civilization in West Virginia, but in political history and information, if not in the philosophy of government and law, is unquestionably the first, (as well as the most neglected) gentleman of this State.”23

But Campbell responded with a disclaimer that closed the case on any claims to a Grant appointment. “I am duly obliged for what has been said in my favor. . . . I neither
make nor prefer any such claims, and . . . I am not and shall not be a candidate for any such appointment.”

As always, the editors of the *Intelligencer* showed their support, putting Campbell’s most recent undertakings into perspective. “For the present, we venture to suggest that as the successful head of one of our greatest and most successful Iron mills, Mr. Campbell is doing the country about as good service as he would in some office under this or the next administration, and laying the foundation for a better future for himself than if he were wasting his energies in the profitless pursuit of some political *ignis fatuus*."

By the summer of 1873, Campbell, who had been re-elected president of Benwood Iron in January, and Wheeling businesses were steaming along successfully. The Wheeling hinge factory had turned out more than 100,000 dozen pair of hinges the year before, employing 105 workers at a cost of $85,000. As one of only three companies in the country which made a full line of goods for sale in hardware stores, the company had business so brisk that it was contemplating building a new factory.

Benwood Iron Works employed 425 men at the mill in Benwood, producing 5,250 kegs of nails per week. The facility had an attached cooper shop that made 1,000 kegs per day. Another forty hands were employed at the company’s blast furnace in Martin’s Ferry, Ohio, turning out up to 240 tons of pig iron a week.

Joseph Wilde, author of *History of Wheeling during the Past Forty Years*, wrote of 1873: “Never before had such handsome dividends on stocks been declared. Every interest prospered and in the general prosperity no thoughts occurred of any future sudden reverse.”
But September 18, 1873, brought financial calamity to the entire country. “The failure of Messrs. Jay Cooke & Co., widely known bankers, with the closing of their New York, Philadelphia and Washington houses and their Washington bank, the First National, was the event of yesterday,” the *Intelligencer* reported in the September 19 issue. “Two or three other houses in New York and one in Philadelphia . . . have also suspended. It was a day of great excitement in Wall Street.”30

A day after the Cooke episode, more than thirty other firms suspended or failed, and runs of people demanding to withdraw their money in cash from several banks were reported. Additionally, the New York Stock Exchange was “the scene of the wildest excitement throughout the morning. . . . Each time a failure was announced a great rush was made to sell stocks,” the *Intelligencer* published on September 20. “Everybody seemed wild with fright. . . . The general panic and depression which followed the suspension of Jay Cooke & Co. yesterday caused the banks to call in loans freely . . . and amid the distrust prevailing . . . found it impossible to renew loans elsewhere or realize upon their securities.”31 On the day the newspaper published that description, the New York Stock Exchange closed for ten days.32

Despite the grim news at a national level, the *Intelligencer* reassured Wheeling residents that “while runs on the banks and suspensions, partial or complete, are reported from most of the larger cities, it is gratifying to be able to state that no disturbance of confidence has yet been felt here. The Wheeling banks are all sound and prudently conducted. Our people know it and wait serenely for the troubles elsewhere to blow over.”33
However, the troubles didn’t blow over. Failures soon slowed but the prospects for recovery were uncertain. “It would not be easy . . . to explain in a satisfactory way the causes that have produced this serious crisis in monetary affairs . . . nor to anticipate the scope of its operations or the limit of its consequences,” the *Intelligencer* told readers, warning that “it is purely a banking panic . . . [but] commercial circles must be affected if the crisis continues and stable banking institutions continue to suspend.”34

The effects spread into every crevice of the economy, engulfing the nation in a prolonged period of industrial and business depression lasting until 1879. During that period unemployment more than doubled, peaking at 8.25 percent in 1878.35 For those who continued to work, wages dropped by half or more.36

Impact on the upper class manifested through declining property values and a rising toll of business failures; construction was halted, bankruptcies doubled, and business declined by almost one-third in areas such as pig-iron and coal production, railroad revenues, and cotton.37 The extended depression also surfaced issues that would take on significance even after the economy had been rejuvenated, such as labor relations, labor statistics, debates over paper money, and bankruptcy laws.38

At the *Intelligencer* things changed rapidly after the news broke. On October 4, just over two weeks after the first financial failure, L.A. Hagans and Granville Hall announced they had sold their interest in the newspaper to their partner John Frew. Frew assured the readers there would be “no violent changes in the political tone of the paper.”39

On October 13, Frew again posted an announcement in the paper that he and Campbell had “associated themselves together for the purpose of carrying on the
Newspaper and general Job Printing business, under the style of Frew & Campbell.”

The partnership had become effective on October 1.

Campbell had purchased a one-half interest of the newspaper he had built, resuming partnership with Frew, who was destined to be his lifelong friend. Once again, Campbell assumed the editorial duties of a daily publication and expressed to the readers the satisfaction in his choice on the day he took over the editorial reigns.

Although I had identified myself with other business interests of importance, and was actively engaged in the discharge of the duties appertaining thereto, I did not feel at liberty to decline resuming a position that was always congenial to my tastes and to which I had devoted so many years of my life. I gave up my interest in the Intelligencer in 1868 for reasons that were private and personal, and without any definite idea of ever again identifying myself editorially with the Press. And yet during that time I never lost my preference for the business nor ceased to regard it as my legitimate occupation should a favorite opportunity occur for resuming it.

It is precisely seventeen years ago to-day [sic] since I first undertook the editorial management of the paper. That was on the 13th of October, 1856. This is now the 13th of October, 1873. I then had scarcely more than passed my majority, had seen but little of business life, and was, as I realize now, very crudely fitted for the work I undertook of publishing a Republican newspaper on Virginia soil. What I lack now of the enthusiasm of youth I trust will be compensated for by the maturity of riper years.

Conveniently for Campbell, the office of Benwood Iron was within a block of the newspaper office, allowing him to easily tend to both responsibilities until February, when Alexander Laughlin was elected president of Benwood. Friends and rivals welcomed Campbell’s return to the Intelligencer. The Washington Reporter, where Campbell had published his first journalistic efforts in 1855, welcomed Campbell’s return “to the ranks of journalism,” reminiscing that Campbell had “unfurled the Republican flag” and despite predictions of failure for such a publication, he “fought the battle bravely,” thereby contributing “more than any one man to the building up of that public
sentiment which made West Virginia.” The editor of the Register, the Intelligencer’s rival newspaper in Wheeling, also welcomed Campbell. Although the Register’s editor did “not expect to agree with him in opinions concerning all of the public questions,” he believed, “our difference of Judgment . . . will lead to no personal ill will. . . . There is abundant room in this city and State for both.” Demonstrating some of the maturity he had referred to a day earlier, Campbell agreed, responding that “in returning to this paper we have determined to live in peace, if not in harmony, not only with our neighbor but our contemporaries generally.”

Having had barely time to become comfortable in the new position, Campbell was called to Bethany on November 1 to be by the bedside of his mother, Phebe, as she passed away. Years later, in writing his family history, he credited her with setting “an example of high principle for her children.” It was she who had instilled a love of learning in Archie. Her son said she was “a thoroughly intellectual woman & the only indulgence she permitted herself was that of reading.” Archie’s cousin Alexander Campbell wrote that Archie “owed much to his mother, who was of a literary family and a highly cultured woman, who devoted much of her time to books and to the training of her children.” Alexander credited her efforts, including that Archie was “drilled in the languages by his father and mother” since an early age, to their son being “well advanced in the classics” when he entered Bethany College.

Archie remembered that his mother “loved to have her children read to her.” Archie took similar pleasure in his own children’s learning and maintained frequent correspondence with them when they were away at school in later years. Immediately after his wife Annie’s death in 1871, however, he would have needed someone to care for
eight-year-old Richard and six-year-old Jessie. Annie had been the only child of Rebecca and Richard Crawford, who had moved from Wheeling to Belmont County, Ohio, across the Ohio River; Campbell also resided there in the years immediately after Annie’s death. Before her death Campbell had written to Annie from his political stump tour in 1868 admonishing her to take care of her ailing mother, acknowledging Rebecca’s dedication to her grandchildren. “Mama, you must relieve her as far as possible from . . . all worry about the children. You cannot afford to forget that her life is largely devoted to you & them, & her ill health may be, in part at least, owing to her anxiety & devotion to you all.” It seems likely Rebecca would have wanted to care for the children after their mother’s death, which could explain Campbell’s change of residence from Wheeling, during those years. In 1874, he once again was residing in Wheeling as a boarder at the St. James Hotel.

At nearly the same time Campbell’s life was changed as a result of Annie’s death, a young woman also was entering a new stage of life in Wheeling. Miss Mary Hallowell, just twenty-one years of age, was hired as faculty of music and languages at the Wheeling Female College in April 1871. The college was held by a joint stock company of which Campbell was a stockholder and by 1877 he was serving on the board of trustees. The college claimed in its advertisements to be “known throughout the country by the accomplished graduates that it has sent forth to all parts of the Union.” The graduates, being “noted examples of culture,” followed courses of study that were “perfect, and comprises everything essential to the perfecting of a cultivated mind, fitting it to the highest position in life—the accomplished grades of science, language, music and fine arts, receiving the advantages of eminent tutors.”
Hallowell, a “brilliant and handsome woman” who was “favorably known” in the Wheeling community, also found a place among the women of Wheeling society. Along with Wheelingites who were the wives of successful businessmen, such as Mrs. George Wheat and Mrs. G.W. Franzheim, Hallowell contributed her time to acceptable charities, such as the Children’s Home. All three women were among twenty-six who were named “lady managers” to aid the institution’s directors in 1874.57

Mingling in the same circles, many of which included Campbell’s professional colleagues, it is probable that Hallowell and Campbell crossed paths often. On January 27, 1875, they were married in Cleveland, Ohio. He was forty-one, she twenty-five.59 Campbell’s fellow editor from the rival publication, the Register, good-naturedly reported the next day that “Mr. A.W. Campbell, not satisfied with the responsibilities attached to the conduct of a daily journal, has deliberately added to them by taking unto himself a wife.” The editor, a member of the opposing political party, closed his congratulations by wishing the couple “much happiness and success in everything in life, except in securing political triumphs.”60

Mr. and Mrs. Campbell settled down in Wheeling, on Fifteenth Street, and Archie went back to editing and a life of business. Mary soon had her husband participating in society-favored events, such as the Martha Washington Tea Party, a program to raise funds for the Children’s Home. While his wife served as a vice president for the event planning, as well as on the arrangements and tableaux committees, Campbell agreed to work on the printing committee. Nearly 2,000 people attended the event, which featured entertainments, such as Mary Campbell as character Mary Stuart, known more widely as Mary Queen of Scots, in tableaux depicting the subject’s life.61
A year after their marriage, a disaster occurred at the iron works. All buildings at the Benwood mill were destroyed by fire on April 5, 1876, causing four hundred employees to be put out of work. Twenty thousand kegs of nail also were destroyed. Although devastating, insurance covered nearly everything lost in the fire, so Campbell and the other company directors voted to start rebuilding immediately. In order to continue production while the new plant was under construction, the company leased a plant in Martin’s Ferry for almost a year. When finished, the new Benwood facility was a showplace of modern manufacturing.

The plant was built to be nearly indestructible. “It is entirely constructed of iron, stone and brick,” the Intelligencer reported. “There is nothing about it that can burn, not even the floors in the nail factory, which are laid throughout with fire brick.” Although the facility cost about $160,000, “it is a model concern in every respect . . . built upon the latest and most improved plans for saving any waste of expense. Indeed the whole mill is arranged in all its departments upon the principles of comfort, convenience and economy.” The newspaper described the nail factory portion of the mill as “a royal building . . . as light as day, and . . . thoroughly furnished with the best equipments [sic] for all the processes involved in making nails.”

But fire wasn’t the only challenge the plant faced in those years. Four labor unions of highly skilled operators had developed in the iron trades: the heaters, the roll-hands, the puddlers, and the nailers. The common laborers and semi-skilled workers were not included in membership. Seeking greater power through unanimity of action, representatives of the four unions met in Pittsburgh in 1876 and united into the National Amalgamated Association of Iron & Steel Workers. As in other industries, unions gained
strength during the period. Union sentiment was high in Wheeling and all area mills had been organized by 1878. As evidence of the unionist’s support, the newly combined union group held its second annual convention in Wheeling that year. 67

At about the same time the iron manufacturers also came together for mutual protection. 68 The directors of the Wheeling and Pittsburgh nail mills formed the Western Nail Association with a purpose of maintaining prices. The group “recognized the right of every member of an industry to his share of the going business and assumed that a member’s share was in proportion to his productive capacity.”69 Essentially, the conglomerate was able to fix prices, stifle competition from outside of the Wheeling and Pittsburgh area, and gouge the market.

In 1878, with the new mill in full operation, Laughlin resigned his position as president and director and struck out on his own as a mill owner, purchasing the plant Benwood had leased while building their new facility. 70 Campbell was again elected president of Benwood Iron Works on March 19, 1878, a position he continued to hold for several years. 71

During a labor dispute between the Wheeling iron companies and the workmen a few years later, the Register published that Campbell spoke “very strongly against making any concessions to the workingmen, and favored holding out until the men consented to their demands.” Campbell blamed the newspaper’s editor of “utter falsity and recklessness in the statement,” stating that he had “purposely refrained from taking any part, even as a spectator, in nearly all the meetings or conferences of the manufacturers in regard to the strike.” Campbell also published a declaration in the Intelligencer stating his stance on the worker’s rights to and necessity of unions.
The editor . . . has argued . . . in favor of the rightfulness, healthfulness and necessity of such labor organizations as the Amalgamated Association. His position has been, and is now, that such organizations are necessary and that labor is in duty bound to organize for its own defense, and that it has exactly the same right so to do that capital has to organize for the furtherance of its interests. . . . We hold that a judicious and intelligently officered organization of labor is a great good. 72

When Campbell had been re-elected president of Benwood, he was about a week shy of his forty-fifth birthday. In the same year he also became a father again when Mary gave birth to a girl, Cornelia. Cornie, as Campbell called her, joined eleven-year-old Jessie in the Campbell household. 73 Having reached age thirteen, Richard was living with relatives while attending school in Hanover, Massachusetts. 74

Campbell’s father, Archibald Sr., also lived in the household until his death in April 1879 at the age of seventy-five. 75 In a letter to Campbell after receiving news of her father’s death, his sister Jane Dawson expressed her thankfulness that the last few years of their father’s life were “spent in comfort and rest from all worldly consideration—for which he was unfitted, and that he came and went as he chose and as he so much liked to do. To you be owed this comfort and freedom.” 76 Campbell was the only child of Phebe and Archibald Campbell remaining in West Virginia. His siblings were scattered; Jane had married a Methodist minister and lived in Massachusetts, Augustus had returned to Kansas, and Thomas held a position in the Louisville, Kentucky, post office. 77

Campbell had experienced several changes, but the first year of a new decade, 1880, proved to be a grand one. He had suffered no loss of fascination with politics and 1880 was a presidential election year. Chairman of the Republican State Committee, Campbell—“the great apostle to the Republicans,” according to the Register—again made the rounds during the canvass, speaking to crowds of party loyalists to stoke their
enthusiasm. The canvass led up to the state convention, at which delegates would be chosen to represent West Virginia at the upcoming national convention in Chicago.

Former President U.S. Grant was expected to contend for the party’s nomination as the presidential candidate. He had served two terms as president from 1869 to 1877 and a third term in the office was unprecedented, but he was backed by many in the political old guard—known as the Stalwarts—who wielded a great deal of power in the party. Other potential nominees included James Blaine, a former representative from Maine who had support from a more moderate faction of the party, and John Sherman of Ohio, the secretary of the treasury in the current Rutherford B. Hayes administration, whose supporters aligned with neither the establishment nor moderates. West Virginia Republicans were split; most favored Blaine, but Campbell and a few others preferred Sherman. Nearly all were opposed to Grant.

When the state convention gathered in Wheeling, Campbell called the meeting to order by authority of his position on the state committee. The *Intelligencer* described the meeting as “not by any means a harmonious assemblage. . . . It was sufficiently divided in views . . . to make its deliberations at time very lively.” The primary disagreement was between the Blaine supporters, who attempted to pass a resolution that all delegates from the state must vote for their man at the national convention, and the Sherman men, who refused to have their vote dictated. The resolution to send instructed delegates did not pass, but the Blaine men determined they would only vote for delegates at large that would support Blaine. When Campbell was elected to fill the delegate at large position, the convention delegates called on him to pledge his fidelity to vote for Blaine. He refused to do so and the representative from Harrison County, “in a very fiery manner
exclaimed that if the delegate at large ‘would not stand up and express his sentiments, Harrison county would move to reconsider the vote by which she had chosen him.’” In response, Campbell “announced that if because Harrison county [sic] had voted for him, she expected to coerce him into doing anything he did not see fit to do, he surrendered her trust.”

Campbell’s reaction at the state convention proved to be a prelude to the national convention, which convened on June 2. Campbell was the chair of the West Virginia delegation, which included ten delegates. During the first day the standard procedures were taken to appoint committees to report on rules, resolutions, credentials, and organization. In day three, before the committees had concluded their work and reported to the convention and before any other business had been considered, Roscoe Conkling put forth a resolution that would require every delegate of the convention to be “bound in honor to support its nominee, whoever that nominee may be; and that no man should hold a seat here who is not ready to so agree.” Conkling was a senator from New York who wielded great political power, controlling patronage positions in his state. He also led the movement to nominate Grant for a third term.

When the states were called to vote on Conkling’s resolution, West Virginia lodged three dissenting votes—the convention’s only votes against the resolution. Then, in order to identify the dissenters, Conkling demanded a roll call, whereby each individual delegate had to voice his vote before the thousands of people in attendance. Campbell and two colleagues proudly declared their vote in the negative and Conkling immediately put forth another resolution that would prevent them from voting on any
additional measures in the convention, effectively silencing their voices. There were calls from the other delegates for the three men to leave the convention completely.

Before the second resolution could be voted upon, Campbell rose and took the floor, wishing to “make a few remarks.” He recited his qualifications as a Republican and recounted the derision and threats of violence he had been subjected to when he had become one of the first Republicans in the state of Virginia. “If it has come to this, that . . . a delegate from that State to a Republican Convention cannot have a free expression of his opinion, I for one am willing to withdraw from this Convention,” he told the crowd.

For twenty-three years I have published a Republican newspaper in that State. I have supported every Presidential Republican nominee in that time. I expect to support the nominee of this Convention. . . . I have consistently and always supported our State and National Republican nominees. But . . . I feel, as a Republican, that there is a principle in this question, and I will never come into any Convention and agree beforehand that whatever may be done by that Convention shall have my endorsement. Sir, as a free man, who, God made free, I always intend to carry my sovereignty under my own hat. I never intend that any body of men shall take it from me.

I do not . . . make my living by politics; I make it by my labor as a newspaper editor; and I am not afraid to go home and say that I stood up here in this Convention and expressed my honest opinion, as I was not afraid to stand up in the state of West Virginia, when but 2,500 men were found to vote for Abraham Lincoln, though, I am glad to say, that that party has risen to-day [sic] to 454,000 votes. . . . I am not afraid, sir, to go home and face those men as I have faced them always. 82

Another delegate from West Virginia, though differing from Campbell’s vote, stood to defend him. “In the name of God, has it come to this, that one who has battled as A.W. Campbell has . . . in behalf of Republicanism, when it cost something more than it did in the State of New York or in the State of Maine cannot freely express his opinion in a Republican Convention?” Someone responded that the resolution wasn’t about free
speech, but about supporting a doctrine of the party and anyone who did not support it should not be allowed a vote.

“I fear this Convention is about to commit a great error,” James Garfield, with the Ohio delegation, stated as he rose to speak. “We come here as Republicans, and we are entitled to take part in the proceeding of this Convention, and as one of our rights, we can vote on every resolution ‘aye’ or ‘no.’ We are responsible for those votes to our constituents and to them alone.”

Speaking directly of Campbell, Garfield continued. “One of them I know, who . . . has stood up for liberty with a clear-sighted courage and a brave heart equal to that of the best Republican that lives on this globe. And if this convention expel [sic] him, then we must purge ourselves at the end of every vote by requiring that so many as shall vote against us shall go out.”

In closing, Garfield stood with the men who had bravely dissented on principle. He refused to accept their disfranchisement, saying, “There never can be a Convention, of which I am one delegate, equal in rights to every other delegate, that shall bind my vote against my will on any question whatever. . . . Not by my vote shall they be deprived of their seats or their freedom.” Garfield suggested Conkling withdraw his resolution banning their right to vote, which Conkling did, although somewhat begrudgingly and in embarrassment from being bested.83

Garfield had won over the crowd with his speech, a moment of reason in an otherwise tempestuous convention where a near-riot broke out over delegate credentials and thirty-six ballots were required to elect a nominee. Garfield, who had not been one of the original presidential nominees and had received no more than two votes on any of the
first thirty-three ballots said the convention seemed like “it could not be in America, but in the Sections of Paris in the ecstasy of the Revolution.” On the thirty-fourth ballot, Garfield challenged the results; seventeen votes for him were included. “No man has a right, without the consent of the person voted for, to announce that person’s name, and vote for him, in the Convention. Such consent I had not given,” Garfield told the chair. The chair said Garfield was not stating a question of order and told him to take his seat. On the next ballot, the thirty-fifth, Garfield received fifty votes.  

Keeping a tally during the roll call of votes, John Mason, West Virginia’s representative to the Republican National Committee, was joined in the spectator stands by Mrs. Mary Campbell, who had traveled to Chicago with her husband. Mason noted in his convention program, “Mrs. A.W. Campbell who was in the stand with me assisted in keeping the records & added much to the pleasure of the accountants.”

Finally, on the thirty-sixth ballot the dark horse, who had not given his consent to be nominated, received 399 votes, surpassing the 378 needed to become the Republican presidential candidate. Campbell, appointed to the committee that would notify the nominees, joined other committee members at the Grand Pacific Hotel to officially congratulate Garfield and the vice presidential nominee, Chester Arthur.

Mrs. Campbell took pride in her husband’s firm stance on Conkling’s resolution and reveled in the press coverage and adulation he received afterward. The Baltimore American said Conkling “aroused such an eloquent opposition that he was only to [sic] glad too [sic] escape defeat by withdrawing his proposition. The delegate who said he carried his sovereignty under his hat demonstrated to the convention that the hat covered
a level head.” In Indianapolis “a ratification meeting was held . . . indorsing [sic] the course of A.W. Campbell,” the Sentinel reported.

The Pittsburgh Gazette printed that West Virginia “is a small State. But she grows plucky men” and the Dispatch of that city proclaimed “Wheeling and West Virginia should be proud of a citizen like Mr. Campbell.” The Pittsburgh Leader, declared the men of West Virginia had “already become famous. . . Only these three in that great body of over seven hundred men were willing to make this declaration of independence from absolute party rule. Only these three stood up for the principle that no man has a right to absolutely resign his individual opinion in politics at the dictates of a convention or a party.”

A letter sent to Campbell in Chicago from several Republicans in Wheeling was dispatched by the Western Associated Press, congratulating the delegates “for their firmness in support of individual freedom of thought and speech.” The Cleveland Herald, Steubenville Gazette, New Your Tribune, New York Herald, Springfield Republican, Philadelphia Times, and Cleveland Leader were among the newspapers that featured stories about the sovereignty under Campbell’s hat.

Upon their arrival in Wheeling after the convention, Campbell and his fellow dissenters were honored with an event at the Opera House, which was “jammed full of people.” The gentlemen were “placed in carriages, the procession of about one hundred and fifty men formed in front, and preceded by the band, the cavalcade moved down Market street [sic] and took a turn about the city.” When Campbell took the stage, “the audience began a cheer which became universal . . . [they] rose and swung hats, fans and handkerchiefs into the air and cheered lustily.”
In December, another testimonial event was held at the Opera House to honor Campbell in “appreciation of the eminent services rendered to the Republican Party and the people of this State, and the distinction attained at the National Republican Convention at Chicago.”\textsuperscript{96} The \textit{Intelligencer} reported that the event was “an outpouring of the people in honor of a distinguished fellow citizen” at which “his neighbors . . . desired to present to him a lasting and appropriate token of their confidence and approval.” Nearly three hundred people contributed toward the seven-foot-tall oil painting of Campbell. Enclosed in a custom gold frame, it was presented to Campbell at the ceremony by a community that had learned to honor his “intelligent sagacity and public spirit, and to confide in you [Campbell] as an able and independent journalist.”\textsuperscript{97}

Speculation that Campbell would earn a political office resurfaced and when Garfield was elected in November it took on a more decided form, proposing Campbell would be given a Cabinet position. “We would bet a red cider apple that if [Ohio] Governor Foster is not the Postmaster General of the next administration Mr. A.W. Campbell of Wheeling will be the man,” the Cincinnati \textit{Commercial} said, as quoted by the \textit{Daily Inter Ocean} of Chicago.\textsuperscript{98} While some publications were less specific about the position that might be proffered Campbell, many published sentiments similar to the Philippi \textit{Republican}, which said, “The Morgantown \textit{Post} and other West Virginia papers mention A.W. Campbell, of Wheeling, as the probable recipient of favors from the incoming administration in the way of a Cabinet appointment, or some other equally important position.”\textsuperscript{99}

The speculation was fueled by knowledge of connections between Campbell and Garfield, who was a devout member of Disciples of Christ Church, the church
Campbell’s Uncle Alexander had founded and in which his grandfather and father preached. Garfield had been raised on the Western Reserve in northeast Ohio, near Campbell’s maternal family, and was personally acquainted with the Campbells in Bethany, where he had preached. He also had attended Western Reserve Eclectic Institute, which had been founded by the Disciples of Christ and at which the methods and standards were very similar to Bethany College; later he became the principal— equivalent of president—of the institution, which was renamed Hiram College.

The Weston Republican referred to Campbell as “a life-long friend” of Garfield and according to the Galveston Weekly News, the New York Herald said the two men had “particularly friendly relations.” But some publications followed the stance of the Inter Ocean, which claimed that while “General Garfield honors the church of which he is a member . . . he will draw no narrow lines of creed or sect in administering the affairs of the Nation.”

Meanwhile, Campbell’s friends again took action in attempting to secure such an appointment as the press was discussing. In November 1880 J.H. Norton, of Wheeling, wrote to Major D.G. Swain, who would manage the Bureau of Information under Garfield’s direction, that the Republicans of West Virginia expected “a generous recognition of their splendid service” in the presidential campaign. “The popular will singles out Mr. A.W. Campbell as the individual. . . . General Garfield knows all about him, and his abilities, but he does not know probably, that . . . unless this is done, there will be great disappointment felt in the ranks of the party here.” Norton went on to explain that “Mr Campbell knows nothing of this letter, and would instantly disapprove it if he did, but as I well understand the general feeling on the subject I thought it best both
in the interest of Genl Garfield & Mr C—and his friends, that you should be made acquainted with it too.”  

Another series of letters was sent from Mrs. Campbell to Granville Hall, asking for his help in promoting Campbell’s chances of a position. “The idea struck me that I would write you confidentially & ask you to get some editorial notices as regards Mr. Campbell & Garfields [sic] cabinet,” she wrote on December 12. “This I know you will do gladly & moreover if there are any other papers that you are on friendly relations with will you send them editorial notices, this I will consider as a personal favor to me. . . . I am anxious for Mr. Campbell to be recognized.”

Hall’s response was evidently positive, as Mrs. Campbell wrote again a week later that his “proposal to have some friends in Washington write is a very good one, but who shall they be?” She continued to say that she differed “in regard to new-papers [sic]. Here is where Garfield feels the popular pulse. As he will in a certain measure be guided by the opinions & wishes of people from various sections of the country he can only receive his impressions through the news papers [sic].” Her suggestion was for Hall to “write an editorial (that which no man can do better, for I consider you a very perfect & at the same time a very ornate writer) & get some friend to insert in Pittsburg paper.” But her demands didn’t end there. “Another thing will it be asking too much to ask you to write an editorial touching on the selection of two cabinet ministers from south. We pay ¼ of revenue & gave Garfield ¼ of his popular vote & we certainly out of seven ought to have two. Please do this as I don’t care to write them myself & send by return mail. There are some papers I can get it inserted.”
Again, Hall complied. On January 7, 1881, Mrs. Campbell said she had received his “delightful letter & well written article.” She had given the article to a friend for publication, but didn’t know if the friend had been successful, asking Hall if he had succeeded with any of the Pittsburg papers. “The suspense will not be long,” she wrote.  

Mrs. Campbell and others had been correct that the president-elect would look to geography in selecting his Cabinet. But, according to Robert Caldwell, author of James A. Garfield Party Chieftain, the difficulties he faced in making a satisfactory Cabinet were chiefly due to the development of the boss system in some of the most important states, notably New York. A party chieftain system that had begun at city and county levels in earlier days had expanded to the state level, where a powerful individual assured that an active party organization was maintained and favored certain candidates. In return for his support, the chieftain expected to have control of the patronage and to exercise substantial influence in the awarding of contracts and political appointments. New York was controlled by Roscoe Conkling, who had carried the powers of the boss to a high degree of perfection and had become accustomed to having the virtual appointment of officers who were in theory nominated by the president. 

“Each successive arrangement had been like a house of cards, and everything had to wait until all the doubtful places were filled,” Caldwell said of Cabinet appointments. In “Garfield’s various memoranda of possible Cabinets, all positions except the Department of State were considered in the light of geography and the special fitness of a given man for the duties of the office was never allowed to complicate still further the
political considerations that required recognition of each section of the party and the nation.\textsuperscript{108}

In consideration of the system, Campbell’s direct confrontation and conquest of Conkling in front of the national convention, while admired by many Republicans, did not bode well for the probability of his appointment to a Cabinet position. Despite a great deal of support from those outside of the system, Campbell again was snubbed for political appointment.

Another attempt was made to acquire an appointment for Campbell as the minister to Berlin, to replace Andrew White. According to the \textit{Intelligencer} of June 3, the \textit{Evening Star} of Washington published that “A delegation of sixteen prominent West Virginians called on the President to-day [sic]. . . .They presented the name of Archibald W. Campbell of West Virginia, for the Berlin mission. The president’s response was very flattering and encouraging.” The article closed with a familiar sentiment. “It is understood that this was done without the solicitation of knowledge of Mr. Campbell.”\textsuperscript{109}

An article from the \textit{Inter Ocean} with the same news appeared in the \textit{Register}, where the editor commented that Campbell had frequently visited Washington over the past few months. That along with “the favor with which his name has been received in connection with the Berlin mission, leads to the inference that his appointment will be shortly announced,” the \textit{Register} reported.\textsuperscript{110}

But tragedy struck before any appointment to Berlin was made. On July 2 Garfield was shot by an assassin. An \textit{Intelligencer} headline about the assassination on July 3 read: “There you and I and all of us fell down.”
Alexander Campbell, Archie’s cousin, said “President Garfield told me shortly before his assassination that he intended to send him [Archie] as ambassador to one of the great powers.”

Yet another political opportunity had escaped Campbell’s grasp and with all he had accomplished in a decade and the accolades bestowed upon him in the past year, the emotional devastation must have been overwhelming. But according to Alexander, “no one ever heard Archie Campbell utter a complaint or show disappointment; no matter what may have been his feelings, he bore in dignified silence any reverse.”

Mrs. Campbell may not have been so quick to recover from the disappointment of not becoming the wife of a nationally recognized figure, even though Campbell continued to hold an imitable place in Wheeling society and state politics. Although Campbell “lavished his ample wealth upon her and made of her a veritable queen,” Mary had “a propensity for the gayeties of life” and Campbell’s success at a federal level would have helped to satisfy her desires for such. Her willingness to secretly work on his behalf evidences her desire to succeed in this area, likely knowing Campbell “looked with scorn and contempt on those who would resort to tricks and dishonest means to obtain promotion.”

A year later, tricks and dishonesty again visited Campbell’s marriage. In the press of February 17, 1882, a story about “A.W. Campbell . . . who became prominent in the Chicago Convention because he would not vote for Mr. Conkling’s resolution” spread like wildfire through the press. A dispatch was allegedly sent from Wheeling to some major newspapers, reporting that Campbell had “commenced proceeding for a divorce.
from his wife” because of her dalliance with a leading Wheeling businessman. The dispatch carried the sordid story of the purported scandal.

One night last week he [Campbell] had arranged to leave this city on a train departing about 10 p.m. He missed the train whereupon he returned to the editorial room of his paper and worked until 3 o’clock in the morning, when he started home. It seems that Mrs. Campbell, under the impression that her husband had left the city, was entertaining a gentleman who had no business there while the head of the family was absent. Mr. Campbell had hardly got the door of his dwelling unlocked and opened when a man rushed past him out of the house with nothing on but his undergarments, and carrying his clothes on his arm. Mr. Campbell chased the man into a livery stable, two blocks away. ..[and] discovered the man crouched down in a dark corner of a stall; drawing him out into the light, Mr. Campbell, who is a man of powerful physique, jerked him to his feet to get a look at his face. On recognizing him, he said: “Oh, it’s you, is it? That’s all I want to know,” and walked away. Mr. Campbell went to a hotel and spent the remainder of the night. The next day he began a suit of divorce from his wife on the ground of adultery.115

The man, according to the story, was George K. Wheat, a wealthy, married Wheeling society figure and a colleague of Campbell’s on many of the civic and business boards which he served. The date of occurrence was not given in the story, but the Pittsburgh Leader said rumors claimed it was February 7. When the story hit Wheeling, Campbell and Wheat immediately issued a denial, claiming it to be a “falsehood of the most atrocious and devilish character, conceived by some cowardly villain for some unknown, revengeful purpose.”116

The Register, however, claimed that “for something over two weeks past a disgraceful sensation has been in circulation in this city, which would, if true, have blasted the fair fame of two of our prominent families,” indicating the gossip had “invaded every circle of society in this neighborhood, gathering at each turn new embellishments and more sensational characteristics.” The paper claimed the press story “contained nothing that had not already been knocked about like a shuttlecock from
mouth to mouth, in this city, but its appearance produced a decided sensation and reopened the gossip valves time had partially sealed.”

The Harrisburg Patriot, upon receiving and printing Campbell’s and Wheat’s refutation, identified an unseemly trend appearing in journalism of the period. “There is getting to be a little ‘too much of a muchness’ in the efforts of ‘enterprising’ newspapers and still more ‘enterprising’ correspondents to make sensations by defamatory publications,” their article said. “It is about time that the public set its face against the efforts of the sensational press to pander to a morbid taste for the destruction of personal character.” The News-Letter claimed that “scandal mongers seize upon the most trivial circumstances as the groundwork for such slanders,” adding that since the rumors about Campbell and Wheat had begun, “there have been originated in Wheeling no less than seven similar ones, all affecting persons of the highest respectability, and investigation shows that they are all without the slightest foundation in fact.”

Campbell did not file for divorce, but Mr. and Mrs. Campbell made some life changes. Campbell began to look for an editor to take over his duties at the Intelligencer and in November, the newspaper ran an announcement that a new editor and partner had been added, Mr. Charles Burdett Hart, “a gentleman of ripe newspaper experience.” Hart had been an editor most recently at the Philadelphia Press and had joined the Intelligencer “at the personal solicitation of Mr. Campbell . . . to enable him to take a vacation very much needed by the impairment of his health, and very much desired by him as an opportunity for more acquaintance with the outside world.” The business became Frew, Campbell, and Hart, with Hart taking over editorial direction of the newspaper. Campbell, meanwhile, contemplated “a series of travels in different parts of
this country, and perhaps also of Europe, not only for his own recreation and instruction,
but also as a field for correspondence with the columns of this paper.”

In a decade Campbell’s life had come nearly full circle. In 1872 he was single,
just beginning to realize large benefits from his investments, and held no editorial
position to consume his time and energy. By 1882 he had built wealth, prestige, and
power, then had his reputation besmirched as a result of an alleged public scandal. He
had married an attractive and intelligent woman, whose desired extravagant lifestyle he
had found to be incompatible with his staid dignity. He had reclaimed editorship of the
Intelligencer and subsequently desired to hand it over to someone else so he could pursue
other interests. Still, change would continue and Campbell’s life was on the cusp of yet
another and final phase.

Notes

Epigraph. Wheeling Intelligencer, July 17, 1885, CA.
3. A.W. Campbell, in Resources of West Virginia, by M.F. Maury and Wm. F. Fontaine (Wheeling, WV:
The Register Company, Printers, 1876), 403.
Wheeling Intelligencer, February 8, 1869, CA.
9. Ibid., 405.
10. M.F. Maury and Wm. F. Fontaine, Resources of West Virginia (Wheeling, WV: The Register Company,
Printers, 1876), 399–400.
Wheeling Intelligencer, January 10, 1872, CA.; “National Insurance Company,” Wheeling Intelligencer,
January 4, 1872, CA.
17. “Citizens’ Street Railway Company,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, February 1, 1875, CA.
21. “75 Years of Southern Service to Woodward Iron Company.”
25. “Mr. A.W. Campbell, of This City,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, January 22, 1873, CA. *Ignis fatuus*, from Latin, means a deceptive goal or hope.
28. Ibid.
29. Wilde, *History of Wheeling during the Past Forty Years*, 60.
33. “Runs on the Banks,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, September 26, 1873, CA.
36. Wilde, *History of Wheeling During the Past Forty Years*, 60.
38. Ibid., 504–6.
40. “Co-Partnership,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 13, 1878, CA.
43. “Glad to Welcome,” *Washington Reporter*, October 15, 1873, NBAHN.
44. “To Mr. Campbell,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, October 14, 1873, CA.
45. Ibid.
46. A.W. Campbell, “Family History Sketch” 1890s, CPP.
47. “Archie Campbell,” *Bethany Banner*, March 1899, CPP.
48. Campbell, “Family History Sketch.”
50. “A.W. Campbell to Annie (Mamma) Campbell,” August 23, 1868, CPP.
55. Ibid., 96–97.
58. “Our Contemporary.”
60. “Our Contemporary.”
61. “Children’s Home Benefit,” *Wheeling Register*, June 15, 1875, NBAHN.
66. Scott, *Iron & Steel in Wheeling*, 78. Puddlers were responsible for converting pig iron into wrought iron through a process of heating called puddling. They established a union organization called the Sons of Vulcan. The nailers, who shaped the nails from iron, formed the United Nailers union.
67. Ibid.
70. Ibid., 81; “Personal Points,” *Wheeling Intelligencer*, April 9, 1878, CA.
72. “A Card in Regard to the Conference of Thursday.”
73. “United States Census, 1880.”
74. Although there is no conclusive documentation of Richard living with Campbell’s sister, Jane Dawson, in 1878, she and her husband resided in Hanover, Massachusetts. A letter from Jane to Campbell in 1879 asks her brother to “send me by Richard some little thing” of her father’s as a remembrance. In a letter to Campbell from Richard, sent from school in Hanover in 1886, Richard refers to the illness of his uncle, Rev. Dawson. Campbell’s daughter Jessie also lived with relatives during her teens, including in Hanover, Richmond, Kentucky, and Ingleside, Alabama.
75. “Death of Doctor Archibald Campbell,” *Wheeling Register*, April 4, 1879, NBAHN.
76. “Jane Dawson to A.W. Campbell,” April 10, 1879, CPP.
77. “Death of Doctor Archibald Campbell.”
78. “Barbour Letter,” *Wheeling Register*, April 26, 1880, NBAHN.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Kenneth D. Ackerman, *Dark Horse: The Surprise Election and Political Murder of President James A. Garfield* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2003), 85.
86. “John W. Mason Memo in 1880 Convention Program,” June 1880, CPP.
88. Ibid.
90. “A High Compliment to A.W. Campbell,” *Indianapolis Sentinel*, June 11, 1880, NBAHN.
91. “The West Virginia Delegates.”
95. “Radical Rejoicing,” *Wheeling Register*, June 11, 1880, NBAHN
96. “H. Sterling to W.T. Willey,” November 24, 1880, Waitman T. Willey Papers, WVRHC.
97. “High Honors Paid by Citizens of Wheeling to a Fellow Citizen,” Wheeling Intelligencer, December 1, 1880, CA.
98. “Red Cider Apple,” Daily Inter Ocean, January 1, 1881, NBAHN
104. “Mrs. A.W. Campbell to G.D. Hall,” December 12, 1880, Granville Davisson Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.
106. “Mrs. A.W. Campbell to G.D. Hall,” January 7, 1881, Granville Davisson Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.
108. Ibid., 328.
110. “Archibald W.,” Wheeling Register, June 11, 1881, NBAHN.
111. “Archie Campbell.”
112. Ibid.
113. Brace, “Reminiscences of Archibald Campbell.”
114. “Archie Campbell.”
116. “A Foul Slander Refuted.”
117. “The Great Scandal. The Rumors, the Publication and the Prompt and Vigorous Denial.”
118. “A Flat Contradiction,” Patriot, February 21, 1882, NBAHN
119. “A Foul Slander Refuted.”
120. “Announcement,” Wheeling Intelligencer, November 16, 1882, CA.
121. Brace, “Reminiscences of Archibald Campbell.”
Chapter 11: 1883-1899—Seeing the World through Archibald Campbell

He was one who traveled much and long up and down the highways of this busy land. He knew well the circuits and occupations of its crowded, swarming life.  
–Jane Campbell Dawson Diary

Archie Campbell had twice in his life left his newspaper, the *Intelligencer*, but he remained connected to his first love—journalism. After leaving the editor’s chair late in 1882, Campbell hoped to see the world, or as much of it as he could. With income from investments, he had no need to perform daily tasks for pay, his parents had passed away and the responsibility for their care was no longer on his shoulders, Jessie and Richard were both at school, and after a scandal alleging his wife’s infidelity—which was embarrassing regardless of whether claims were true—he was ready to escape daily life in Wheeling.

His wife Mary and daughter Cornelia had traveled with him during the first months of this new-found freedom from the daily grind at the newspaper, but by 1884 Mary was living in Cleveland with Cornie while Campbell traveled around the county alone or with other family members.

On January 1, 1885, Campbell wrote in his diary that he had spent the past four months in New York City. On the January 6, he “remitted Wm Robison, Cleveland, $100 draft on Frew, Campbell & Hart, for board Mrs C & Cornie.”\(^1\) Robison was a trustee through which Campbell handled all transactions with Mary.

On February 6 Campbell left New York to spend time in Vermont, returning to New York and departing on the Steamer Lampasas on April 11, on his way to Galveston, Texas. Upon arriving, he proceeded to Houston by rail. In late May, he was headed to Paola, Kansas, to visit his brother, Gus.\(^2\) On July 10, Campbell noted after leaving Gus’s
house, he “stopped at Huntington House. Mrs C & Cornie there from Cleveland.” He
tioned his daughter on August 31, still in Kansas, when he and “Cornie . . . rode
out . . . in a buggy.” Two days later the two were out for another drive.3 There is no
further mention in his documents of having visited with Cornelia.

By the time Campbell returned to Wheeling in early October 1885 he and Mary
had agreed upon and signed a “post-nuptual [sic] contract . . . with William Robinson
[sic], an attorney at law . . . being and acting with her consent as her trustee.”4

The agreement cited “in consequence of divers [sic] controversies and
disputations it was deemed best and to the mutual advantage of both parties that they
should thenceforth live separate and apart from each other; and it was therein mutually
convenanted [sic] and agreed that they might so live separate and apart during the term of
their natural lives.”5

While divorce wasn’t common, it was becoming more frequent. “Divorce in West
Virginia,” the Intelligencer said in January 1885, “seems to be as easy as rolling off a log,
and in Ohio the business is fairly active.” In Wheeling there had been 125 divorce cases
tried in the Circuit Court between January 1883 and January 1885. “Easy divorce
conduces to easy morals,” the article warned readers. 6 “If a divorce is to be allowed for
every family jar,” the newspaper stated, “or when one party to the marriage contract tires
of it or ‘has learned to love another,’ we may as well readjust society on a different basis
with the marriage contract left out.”7

When an agreement was finalized between Campbell and Mary, making the
couple’s separation permanent, Campbell was conciliatory and generous, as was his
nature. So being, he also was assured of avoiding unpleasant confrontation. As was usual
for Campbell, “no matter what may have been his feelings, he bore in dignified silence any reverse.”

Campbell agreed that Mary should be able to live “with such families as she chose and follow any trade or business she might see fit to, and that he would not sue any person for entertaining or harboring her, and that he would not molest, annoy or injure her at any time.” She was able to keep her “money, jewels, plate, clothing, household goods, furniture or stock in trade” and Mary would have ‘custody, care, control, maintenance, and education” of Cornelia.

Campbell agreed to support ten-year-old Cornie in the total amount of $15,000 paid over ten years, with 8 percent interest. In 2015, the amount would be the equivalent of nearly one-half million dollars. Additionally, Campbell deeded four lots in Chicago, in what is now known as Hyde Park, to Mary to do with what she liked. Mary agreed to the settlement as payment in full and that no further child support or alimony would be sought.

Despite having agreed to “live separate and apart during the term of their natural lives,” Mary’s trustee, Robison, contacted Campbell in September 1887, saying Mary wanted a divorce “on ground of desertion.” Campbell assented and the earlier support agreement was incorporated into the divorce proceedings, with no additions or changes.

A letter he wrote to his daughter Jessie, who was staying in Richmond, Kentucky with a cousin, may have contained the news about Mary’s divorce request. He asked that Jessie burn the letter after reading it. When she responded to her father, she shared that her grandfather Crawford called her childhood “a most peculiar raising.”

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When Jesssie wrote again a month later she recounted that she had “dreamed last night that the worker of all your trouble was no more—is it wicked to wish the dream true—for I do wish it from my heart.” It impossible to know what transpired behind closed doors between Mary and Campbell, but for Jessie the situation left “unhappiness & bitter degrading memories.”

Jessie, who had just turned twenty, had been only eight years old when Mary had married her father and fifteen when they had separated. Whatever experience she had with the union, she was “glad that it came in my early youth when I could out live it & in a measure forget.” But, she lamented, “The poison that wrecked so much of your happiness & peace still lingers in your life,” but conceded that “if all that misery had not been, I might never have been drawn so closely to you nor have known you as I know & appreciate you now.”

With the divorce completed, Campbell should have been free of Mary, but in 1889 she filed a suit in the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas for additional support. Campbell and his lawyer, James M. Jones, prepared a scathing response to counter claims Mary had made in the suit, which was thereafter dropped with no further settlement.

Campbell’s own experience in taking a much younger wife may have been cause for concern in his own daughter Jessie’s future, especially in consideration of her being somewhat spoiled. In 1887 she responded to a letter in which he had expressed concern about the amount of money she spent. “You fear I’m some what [sic] on the extravagant order? Well I’m sorry you should find me so—but Father dear, I must look nice.” And he continually paid the bills so she could do so. She also encouraged him to look nice.
“Father dear, you must get a good new suit of some kind. I prefer it should be dark blue or bluish black broadcloth—have it made well & wear it down to see me and on all extra occasions. I want you to get a becoming hat too. Don’t get one that will make you look old or anything else but what you are—my own dear handsome Father.”16

She tried to convince him to provide her an allowance, rather than pay the bills directly. “Won’t it be convenient for you to make me an allowance. It’s so much nicer than having to ask for money everytime [sic] though you never deny me. Then I could tell just what I could do & when I wanted any thing [sic] special, would save up for it. Couldn’t you give me $350 a year to dress on?”17

He had provided nearly anything she had wanted throughout most of her life, especially in the years since he had separated from Mary; everything except his presence. Jessie’s letters often contained pleas for her father to visit whatever home she was staying in at the time, for she had lived with relatives in Vermont, Kentucky, Alabama, and West Virginia at various times. In January 1890 she wrote, “Every now and then it comes over me afresh that I am never my Father’s companion, that he knows me better through my letters than by actual contact. I wish it could be otherwise.”18 But his letters, like his journalism, were distinct. “Your letters are your own,” Jessie wrote,” and their blows are, as they say in the ring, ‘straight from the shoulder.”19

In 1890 Jessie wrote to tell her father that she had fallen in love and wanted to marry a man that she had recently met. Enclosed with her letter was another letter, from her suitor, William Nave, asking for her hand in marriage. He was forty-seven, she twenty-three, nearly the same ages Campbell and Mary had been when they married. The wedding was planned for June 4, only three weeks after her letter was written.20
Campbell wrote immediately to his cousin Decima Barclay—Alexander Campbell’s daughter, who was called Dessie by her family—at whose Ingleside, Alabama, home Jessie was staying. Campbell referred the decision to Dessie and her friends as to whether Jessie should marry Nave. Dessie shot back a letter saying it was “a matter that cannot be referred, no one is willing to take the responsibility, of advising in a matter like this.”

Nave was well known and liked by the family, Dessie said, and he was “very much in love with Jessie and promises to devote his life to her, to take her wherever she wishes to go, and do everything for her pleasure and happiness.” However, there were other considerations she believed a father should make. “Cousin Archie he is not a Christian, is twice Jessie’s age, and has led a life of fashion & pleasure with plenty of money & his command to indulge his ladies and has been at times intemperate and I cannot and will not take the responsibility of giving Jessie advice in regard to so important a step in life.”

Dessie was even more adamant about Campbell attending the affair. He had responded that he could not come to Alabama because he had other business scheduled, but Dessie reprimanded him for his selfishness. “Your dear little Jessie needs you at this most-critical hour of her life, and when you remember all your love for her & hers for you, I’m sure you will let all else go, and come to us without delay.” Even if he could not “remain until after the wedding,” Dessie insisted that Archie “ought to see & know him and talk piety with him of his hopes & plans for the future, before you give Jessie into his keeping.”21
Jessie pleaded with her father, “You must come down. The mistakes of my life have been many, but this is my last venture and I wait but your permission.”

As always, she won over her father, who postponed his business trip and traveled to Alabama for the wedding. Campbell and Nave hit it off and within two years the three of them, Campbell, Jessie, and her husband, were traveling through Europe together.

In April 1892 Campbell met Jessie and husband, William, in Genoa, Italy. By that time Campbell had already spent six months traveling in Ireland, France, Holland, and England with his partner John Frew. Just as Campbell had brought to life for the Intelligencer readers a vision of a state they could not yet see in 1861, he brought the world from beyond their reach into their homes in a personal way. “Seeing Ireland—The Intelligencer Tourists Do Cork and Its Environs . . . Mr. Frew Fervently Kisses the Blarney Stone” a July 1891 headline in the Intelligencer read. Campbell wrote as if the reader was walking alongside himself and his partner John Frew, who had joined him in Europe, as they trekked through the city, skillfully guiding readers past the quay in the heart of the city, through the countryside eight miles out of town “where there is an old castle . . . called Blarney, a certain stone in which has been kissed by more people than any and all the stones in the known world, (Ah, you should have seen how reverently and fervently my traveling companion from Wheeling kissed it), and where there is a famous Queen’s College at which so many eminent men have graduated.”

By way of his interesting tales and descriptive prose, readers of the Intelligencer joined Campbell as he toured the destinations in Europe that many in West Virginia could only dream of seeing. From July 1891 until August 1892 Campbell treated the readers to views of Italy, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, England, Belgium, and France.
As he had while traveling across the United States during the past several years, Campbell introduced his readers to new people and places and educated them about history, culture, literature, geography, among other topics.

In 1895 his travels took him to Denver for a specific reason, his son Richard’s wedding to Margaret Patterson. Margaret was the daughter of prominent Denver citizen Thomas Campbell, who had been a state legislator and was owner of the Rocky Mountain News. The wedding was a grand social affair of which the Denver Post said of the bride, “under the soft light shed by the shaded electric globes she looked a creation of beauty and loveliness.” Campbell likely would have appreciated the reference to electric lamps. Since leaving the Intelligencer office in 1882, in addition to travel he had continued to speak publicly and promote improvements for Wheeling and West Virginia. In 1891 he was one of a group of city leaders who had lobbied the state legislature, which opposed “the desire of the people to have the city furnish electric lights” and were “anxious to place the light in the hands of a company which will work for its own profit and not for the profit of the people.” Campbell suggested a group go to Charleston to directly present the case to the legislators who were debating a bill to limit the generation and sale of electric to a private corporation. He joined four others on that group. “Some kinds of competition are good and wholesome, but there is another that is not good. . . . When the electrical company was permitted to experiment with electricity in this city there was no intimation either public or private that there should ever be any restriction upon the city’s right to make and sell the electric light,” he told those at a meeting of disgruntled citizens.
Richard followed in his father’s footsteps, although he diverged from the editorial path his father had so bravely took. Instead, Richard worked for his father-in-law as the business manager of the Rocky Mountain News. A.W. Campbell is shown in figure 2 standing next to a man who is believed to be his son Richard C. Campbell, although there is no positive identification of the second man on the image.

Figure 2. Archibald W. Campbell, standing, with an unidentified man thought to be his son. Courtesy of the Joseph Hoffmann Collection, Ohio County Public Library Archives, Wheeling, WV.

In 1895 A.W. Campbell moved to Missouri to live with his sister Jane Campbell. This decision may have been prompted by the financial panic of 1893 that swept the
nation, lasting through 1898. Similar to the economic depression in 1873 that had taken place just before Campbell had repurchased his *Intelligencer*, this crisis caused a panic on the stock market, banks to call in loans, and business bankruptcies. Jane’s residence was a point to which he returned as he continued to travel and occasionally wrote about his adventures. In 1893 he spent several weeks in Chicago visiting the World’s Fair, and in 1897 was a member of an excursion to a silver mining camp in the mountains of Colorado.

Nearly 130 people had joined the excursion, taking a series of carriages and stagecoaches up the mountain to view the camp and when coming back down the “narrow road cut out of the rocks at a height of four hundred feet above the bottom of the canon, [sic] . . . a road that had a declivity of two hundred and fifty feet to the mile,” the wagon in which Campbell was riding overturned and one of the passengers was thrown out and killed. The Associated Press dispatched a brief mention of the accident, which Campbell followed up with a detailed story written in his usual entertaining style. His story was included in both the *Intelligencer* and the *Rocky Mountain News*. Others commenting on the event claimed that Campbell, who had been seated alongside the carriage driver, was a hero. “The salvation of the party is due to the presence of mind of Mr. Campbell and the driver, who together kept the team in hand. . . . There is a sharp curve in the road to go around which at the terrific speed the team was traveling, . . . would have meant death to all.”

Archie Campbell lived in Jane’s home in Webster Groves, Missouri until his death on February 13, 1899 from a stroke.
When his will was executed, he left a small amount to Jane and to his brother Thomas, but Jessie and Richard received the bulk of his sizeable estate. Mary and Cornelia showed up in Wheeling and contested the will. An out of court settlement was reached prior to a court ruling, however, closing the case.30

During the last phase of his life, A.W. Campbell’s travels in Europe indulged his lifelong thirst for learning and adventure and the results of those indulgences he shared through stories to his beloved readers, gratifying his urge to help others increase their knowledge. During Campbell’s later years, these and other characteristics that had been displayed throughout his life were reinforced and often strengthened.

At his core Campbell was a man whose foundation called for firm adherence to his values and principles. He was in reality an idealist who had learned to bear stoically those occasions when his idealism was challenged and practical actions were required. Such had been the case during the early days at the Intelligencer, when he had set out to establish a newspaper that would present all views, including opposing ones, but he had learned the newspaper’s existence depended on the financial support of those who were not so liberal in their views. Many times during the first fifty years of life, he had to make decisions that might have bent his principles, but he never let them be broken completely.

He was also a man who avoided personal confrontation when possible. Although a fierce competitor when defending a cause with his pen or on the speaker’s platform, much like his father he was personally a quiet, peace-loving man. In the same vein as his family of gospel preachers, Campbell had a command of language that resulted in fiery persuasiveness to warn audiences of the evils surrounding them and provide answers to salvation. However, the evils he identified usually were a threat to daily life and progress
of society, rather than to the listener’s soul. But Campbell’s often provocative rhetoric seldom was directed in a mean-spirited or personal way.

Cousin Alexander Campbell said “no one ever heard him make an ill-natured remark or use a harsh expression about an opponent or in fact about anyone.” Alexander would have been as likely as anyone to be on the receiving end of any such communication, as he and Archie spent several years bitterly estranged. Both fought valiantly in the Civil War, employing different weapons and loyalty to different sides. But while Archie was “bold as a lion in defending a principle, he was modest and retiring to a degree and . . . strong and faithful in his attachments,” Alexander said.31 The two men were not only cousins but close friends during their schooldays at Bethany and in the end the strength of their past relationship won out and the two men reconciled after the war had ended.

True friends could count on Campbell’s loyalty, and he wasn’t hesitant to share kind words. According to his daughter Jessie, she had heard her father say “people ought to tell each other the pleasant things they feel, for, dear knows, there are plenty to communicate the hard thoughts.”32

Campbell followed his own advice when he assured John Mason that writing a letter of recommendation for him had been “a labor of love.” Mason supplanted Campbell as the state’s Republican Party leader and could have been viewed as a threat, but had earned Campbell’s respect. “I have never forgotten how you stood by me in May 1880 when I needed a friend!” he wrote to Mason. “And aside from that fact, I had learned to know, appreciate and admire your large heartedness & generosity, your conscientiousness & prudence. . . . I felt I could endorse you with my whole heart.”33
He also was pleased to spend time with old friends such as Frank Pierpont, who had changed the spelling of his last name by the time he wrote in 1887 encouraging Campbell to come visit him at his daughter’s house in Pittsburgh. “You can come here, Nannie wants you to come,” Pierpont asserted. And Nannie, Pierpont’s daughter, Anna Siviter, did want Campbell to visit. Having known Campbell since she was a small child, she appealed to his sense of humor by referring to a joke he had shared with her when she was young. “‘When the queen desires anything she sends an autographed letter’ so you once informed me. The Queen is very anxious you should make her house your home. . . . We are in a very pretty neighborhood and a good many people have expressed a desire to see you.”35

Though his stanch loyalty to the Republican Party did not waver, as he aged he became more selective in which battles he thought were important to support and turned over the reins of leadership in the state organization to younger men. He continued to be held up for office on a regular basis and continued to have the support of those in power. When the Interstate Commerce Commission, overseen by five commissioners named by presidential appointment, was created in 1887 to regulate railroads and eliminate discrimination in rates Campbell was promoted by friends to be among the first group of commissioners. J.J. Jackson, a district court judge who had served on the West Virginia debt commission with Campbell, wrote to the president endorsing Campbell as a “man of high character and integrity, of varied attainments, possessing fine business capacity, and one of the best informed men upon all economic questions of my acquaintance.”36 Former President Rutherford B. Hayes recommended Campbell to the current president, saying he was “an able honorable and wise gentleman of large experience and
intelligence . . . and thoroughly equipped by practical acquaintance with the business
concerns most interested in the work of the Commission.” Hayes urged the president to
consider Campbell for appointment. “His reputation where he is known—and he is very
widely known—is up to the requirements of the important office.”

In 1891 he was again touted for the governor’s chair by the Republican press. The
Fairmont *West Virginian* said Campbell was “well-informed upon the tariff, and when he
returns from his European trip he will simply be invincible, and I believe that under the
present political condition, the tariff being a leading issue, he would be far the strongest
candidate.” The Wheeling *Register* was opposed to the idea and said the opportunity
had passed by Campbell for such an office.

Many old residents of this section also with “years of experience” . . . would like
to hear Mr. Campbell . . . tell about “old times” as they were when Mr. Campbell
was, say, something over a quarter of a century younger and had control of things
hereabouts. Mr. Campbell could make a most interesting speech, based on the
events of those times. Those were the days when the Republicans “owned things”
around here and were “in it” strictly. A Democrat was not even allowed to vote
without Republican consent. . . . Things have changed . . . from the “dark days,”
when Mr. Campbell was a sort of quasi Republican ruler of the State.

Even though he never served in any of the offices for which he was touted,
Campbell continued to champion the progress of the state he had helped to create,
although he spent less and less time within its borders and lived the last four years of his
life in Missouri. He was regarded as an authority, especially on matters related to the
tariff and economic issues, but during his later years he less frequently put himself at the
center of a hornet’s nest of action as he had when he was younger. The *Register’s*
comments in 1888, claiming that Campbell continued to “wave the bloody shirt” of the
struggle between the North and South, rang true. “Mr. A.W. Campbell . . . delights to
refer to the times of the ‘60s in West Virginia, which he, together with many old residents of Wheeling remember so vividly. The present generation of voters, however, are not interested in these old tales because two-thirds know nothing of them.”

As his state and he aged, Campbell spent more of his time dedicated to strengthening close relationships. By 1897 Campbell had two grandchildren, Jessica Nave, whom he called Judy, and Thomas Patterson. He frequently visited and even more frequently wrote. His joy was evident in letters to his granddaughter. From his home in Webster Groves, Missouri, where he lived with his sister Jane after 1895, Campbell wrote a typical letter to two-year-old Jessica, Jessie’s daughter.

Dear Little Judy Nave. I was thinking about you this morning . . . I’ve been thinking about you since I came away out here on the “chew-chew” from Wheeling. . . . I am wondering just what you look like these days, & whether yr little face is red & yr hair curly & yr eyes blue . . . . I suppose you go down to the swing sometimes & get in & then all your little folks make it tick-tack like a hammock & have lots of fun . . . . You must take yr mama up stairs [sic] & get her to sit-down at that writing desk & then tell her a whole lot of things to write to me. Grandpa”40

For most of his life Campbell’s words had been chosen carefully to connect with the audience he was addressing, whether that audience was a political convention of thousands, a newspaper reader in Wheeling, or a two-year-old girl who could not yet read. Considering all of his talents and accomplishments, the most valuable legacy he left was his words.

The journalist, Campbell’s protégé Granville Hall said, is “to be the historian of the current events of his time.”41 Archie Campbell was, as he said many times, first and foremost a journalist. His personal characteristics guided his journalistic behavior and his success as a journalist helped him make connections, open doors, and take actions that
provided great benefit to his state and the nation. Campbell’s pursuit of those opportunities, nearly all of which were a result of his chosen journalism career, impacted his world.

Within his chosen profession he built the *Intelligencer* into a respected, influential and interesting publication that carried multiple perspectives on topics of importance. His work ethic contributed, but his ability to observe and listen to his surroundings is what set the newspaper apart. On the twenty-third anniversary of the publication, the neighboring Belmont, Ohio, *Chronicle* congratulated Campbell on the paper’s accomplishment. The editor, having been a subscriber since 1855, credited the journal’s success to Campbell’s principles-based journalism. “We were interested in the success of the journal because it was interested in us, and with a bold, fearless, gallant champion of the right as we then understood it, and have since with a maturer judgment, never had cause to renounce it.”^42

In the early years, the *Intelligencer* and Campbell were one and the same. The newspaper existed because of his belief in what it could become and his inexperience that prevented him from knowing it couldn’t. It survived because of his sheer determination to make it work. And it continued because he had established such a strong foundation that it could withstand changes in technology, sentiments, practices, and editorial direction.

But it was more than just a local newspaper. Through the *Intelligencer* Campbell provided a platform that influenced opinions throughout the north, especially in Western Virginia, when the country was in crisis during the Civil War. It was a beacon to many readers, providing news and hope. To its political opponents it was a formidable foe not to be taken lightly. To a fledgling movement for independence it was a godsend. In an
interview with an elderly Frank Pierpont, in which Campbell and the governor reminisced about the days of the statehood movement, Pierpont asked Campbell, “What would I have done without the Intelligencer in those days? I felt then and feel now that it was the right arm of our movement.”

An analysis of newspaper content during that period showed the Intelligencer was a reliable center of information regarding the movement. Other newspapers picked up and more broadly shared the sentiments printed in the Intelligencer, amplifying the persuasiveness of the publication. Newspapers in the region reprinted articles from the Intelligencer, which also often reprinted articles from other publications to provide readers a broader view of the situation. Those reports from Western Virginia made a successful case for statehood based on constitutionality and expediency that reached beyond the borders of the region and helped to convince Congress and the president to approve a controversial bill admitting the thirty-fifth state into the Union.

As important as its content was the Intelligencer’s affiliation. Campbell established the Intelligencer as a nonpartisan publication and while it remained open to publish opposing views throughout Campbell’s entire editorship, during the first five years it became progressively more Republican. The author believes there were three factors that brought about the shift to a specific political allegiance. First, by 1860 Campbell sought financial support that would pay off his debt and allow the Intelligencer to remain in business; that support came from Republican leaders such as William H. Seward and John Underwood. As a result, Campbell’s loyalty and feelings of obligation to the party and those Republicans who supported him were strengthened. Second, Campbell desired to be a recognized player in party politics. It was an interest he
demonstrated before pursuing a journalism career and purchasing the *Intelligencer* when, as a stranger, he called upon President Van Buren and Senator Seward at their homes. A partisan newspaper better supported Campbell’s desire to be a political leader, providing him with leverage to increase his value to the party by offering the support of his press for party candidates and policies. Third, as divisive tensions between the North and South grew taut, beginning with John Brown’s raid of Harper’s Ferry and increasing with Lincoln’s campaign and election, Campbell, like others throughout the nation, felt pressure to chose a side. Campbell strongly opposed secession, from both a legal stance and his belief that disconnecting from the North would devastate Wheeling’s economy. Campbell’s views were directly aligned with Lincoln’s administration and the Republican Party, so his newspaper’s stance reflected his own. The anticipation of being rewarded with a patronage position after Lincoln’s election, which was bestowed in the form of the postmastership, served to solidify the connection. Essentially, as the *Intelligencer* increasingly took a partisan position the change helped to satisfy Campbell’s personal need for business success and his personal desire for power. The fact that he agreed with the Republican platform made the shift a possibility; his integrity would likely have prevented him from supporting something with which he did not agree.

The shift in the *Intelligencer* was fortuitous as Virginia’s secession led to Western Virginia becoming a battleground both politically and physically. As a Republican journal, the *Intelligencer* was aligned with a Republican administration that controlled the future of the people of Western Virginia. It was federal military and monetary support that secured the region, providing citizens the ability to pursue statehood. The very existence of the Restored Government’s legitimacy and the approval of a new state were
dependent on the administration. In directing his newspaper to a partisan position, Campbell had placed himself in a stronger position to influence the large network he had established, many of whom were members of the party, and to parlay for support of Western Virginia.

Campbell’s personal influence within that network was as important to the statehood movement as were the pages of the *Intelligencer*, but without his position at the *Intelligencer* he would not have been able to establish such a powerful network. As the region sought statehood, his position proved to be invaluable to the cause.

In the years after the Civil War, he was able to leverage that network and the reputation he had built, expanding into other pursuits that gained him wealth and prestige. The newspaper also provided him with an ongoing platform in which to address issues that arose as the state matured, such as the “let-up” of proscription and the importance of labor relations.

Campbell was more than just the editor of the *Intelligencer*, he was an activist who employed the pages of the journal to help bring about changes to his community and state that he strongly felt were needed. Those changes weren’t always political. He also employed his press to build support for a lecture series, river improvements, electric lights and other improvements that would benefit the residents and businesses of Wheeling.

The newspaper would not have been as powerful without Campbell nor Campbell as successful without the *Intelligencer*. He was talented and smart and would likely have succeeded in other circumstances, but that success may not have had such a broad impact if not for the *Intelligencer* as a launchpad. The newspaper provided a profession and
vehicle especially suited to Campbell’s characteristics and talents. Being an editor challenged him to maintain and meet the high expectations for his own integrity, but also provided a paper thin barrier between Campbell and the face-to-face confrontation he preferred to avoid. Staying on top of topics stoked his curiosity to learn and a need to fill the Intelligencer’s pages gave him a reason to quench his curiosity. The newspaper allowed him to share his vast wealth of knowledge, to teach, and to explain.

Granville Hall prepared a lecture entitled “Journalism, The Noblest of the Professions” which can be found in his archival papers. Hall learned to be a journalist under Campbell’s tutelage and while Halls’ lecture may not have been written about Campbell, the teacher’s influence is apparent.

“The local chronicler,” Hall said, “needs that innate curiosity and inquisitiveness that prompts people to ‘want to know.’ He must have also the intelligence and judgment to recognize news when he finds it—that is, news adapted to the wants of his paper. And this is not so simple as might be supposed.”

Because few have the time or ability to “follow the currents of the world,” Hall said, the journalist “needs to be broad. . . . He must know enough of all countries and peoples . . . and be familiar enough with the progress of current events, to detect error or imposition, but also be competent in his judgment of the matters that come to him to make intelligent and judicious comment.”

A far higher function, Hall claimed, was as commentator, teacher, director and shaper of popular opinion. It is the function Campbell served so well.

It is essential that he have capacity to perceive the drift of events, to forecast their influence on other events and on the social and political problems that always press for solution or better treatment. The true journalist in this sense must be a
statesman; and he often is, abler than the men who are chosen to take the helm, who are supposed to guide the Ship of State when in truth they only drift with popular currents set in motion by discussion in the public journals.44

A.W. Campbell was a man of great capacity. He was a man with imperfections as well as admirable qualities, most certainly, but he was a man well suited to the professional position he chose and the times in which he lived. He has been called a father of West Virginia, an honor he rightfully deserves, for he helped to create the child of secession called West Virginia and nurtured it through its formative years. However, Campbell might best be remembered by Hall’s description of a journalist.

“In Journalism, as in statesmanship, in war, in all the affairs of a people, much depends on the man. When he is equipped with great capacity and what is even more important, with a conscience, in no field are there greater potentialities.”45

Notes

Epigraph. Jane Campbell, Diary (Morgantown, WV, 1916 1909), Jane Campbell Dawson Diary and Other Material, WVRHC
1. “A.W. Campbell Diary” 1885, CPP.
2. Jane Campbell Diary, WVRHC.
3. Ibid.
4. “Court of Common Pleas, Cuyahoga County, Mary H. Campbell, Plaintiff vs. A.W. Campbell, Defendant. Answer of the Defendant,” February 1889, CPP. The document is the defendant’s, A.W. Campbell, answer to a suit filed by Mary H. Campbell two years after their divorce, claiming a right to additional support for their child Cornelia. According to the Cuyahoga County Court archives, the suite was dropped by Mary Campbell before reaching court.
5 Ibid.
8. “Archie Campbell.”
11. “Wm Robison to A.W. Campbell,” September 6, 1887, CPP.
12. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” October 29, 1887, CPP.
13. Jessie Campbell Nave, “Jessie Campbell-Nave Diaries” (Diary, Morgantown, WV, 1892 1891), Jessie Campbell-Nave Diaries, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.


16. Ibid.

17. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” January 23, 1888, CPP. A $350 allowance would have been equivalent in 2015 to about $9,200 a year, or more than $700 per month.

18. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” January 25, 1890, CPP.

19. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” February 7, 1888, CPP.

20. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” May 12, 1890, CPP.

21. “Dessie Barclay to A.W. Campbell,” 1890, CPP.

22. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” May 12, 1890.


25. “The Sound of Wedding Bells,” Denver Post, September 6, 1895, NBAHN.


27. Ibid.


29. “Mr. Campbell’s Courage,” Wheeling Intelligencer, July 21, 1897, CA.


31. “Archie Campbell.”

32. “Jessie Campbell to A.W. Campbell,” October 29, 1887.

33. “A.W. Campbell to John W. Mason,” July 23, 1882, John W. Mason Papers, WVRHC.

34. “F.H. Pierpont to A.W. Campbell,” September 3, 1887, CPP.

35. “A. Pierpont Siviter to A.W. Campbell,” September 3, 1887, CPP.

36. “J.J. Jackson to Benjamin Harrison,” March 28, 1889, CPP.

37. “Rutherford B. Hayes to Benjamin Harrison,” 1889, CPP.

38. “The Next West Virginia Governorship” (Newspaper Clipping, 1891), CPP.

39. “Governor,” Wheeling Register, November 3, 1891, NBAHN.

40. “A.W. Campbell (Grandpa) to Jessica (Judy) Nave,” May 11, 1897, CPP.

41. Ibid.

42. “The Wheeling Intelligencer,” Belmont Chronicle, September 8, 1874, CPP.

43. “A Talk between the Grand Old Man and Mr. A.W. Campbell,” Wheeling Intelligencer, April 14, 1897, CA.

44. “Journalism, the Noblest of Professions” (Glencoe, IL, 1896), Granville Davisson Hall (1837-1934) Papers, WVRHC.

45. Ibid.
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Abbreviations

Collections and archives frequently cited have been identified in notes by the following abbreviations.

AWC    Archibald W. Campbell, (1839-1899), Newspaperman Papers. WVRHC.  
CA     Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Library of  
       Congress.  
CPP    Campbell and Patterson Family Papers. Denver Public Library.  
LVA    Library of Virginia.  
NBAHN  NewsBank/Readex. Database: America’s Historical Newspapers.  
WVRHC  West Virginia Regional and History Center. West Virginia University  
       Libraries.

Archives and Collections

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Campbell and Patterson Family Papers, WH1264, Western History Collection. Denver  
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Solomon Defibaugh Papers. 1862-1865. Ohio History Connection Library/Archives.
Virgil Lewis Papers. West Virginia Archives and History.
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Waitman T. Willey Papers. West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.
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Newspapers

*Charleston (VA) Kanawha Valley Star.* West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.
*Chicago (IL) Press and Tribune.* Chicago Tribune Archives.
*Cincinnati Enquirer.*
*Cleveland Leader.* NewsBank/Readex, Database: America’s Historical Newspapers.
*Denver (CO) Rocky Mountain News.* NewsBank/Readex, Database: America’s Historical Newspapers.

Fairmont (VA) True Virginian. West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.


Kingwood (VA) Chronicle. West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.

Lewisburg (VA) Chronicle. West Virginia Archives and History. West Virginia Division of Culture and History.


Martinsburg Virginia Republican. West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.

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New York Herald.


Philadelphia (PA) Public Ledger.

Richmond (VA) Dispatch. University of Richmond Libraries.

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Richmond (VA) Whig.

St. Louis (MO) Republic. NewsBank/Readex, Database: America’s Historical Newspapers.

Akron Summit County (OH) Beacon. NewsBank/Readex, Database: America’s Historical Newspapers.

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Williams’ Wheeling Directory. Williams, 1864.
Appendix A: Content Analysis Information

The author’s two-phase study, “The Legitimization of New Virginia: How the Press Framed the Movement for West Virginia Statehood,” analyzed press coverage during 1861 using a frame analysis to examine the selection and salience of certain aspects of the issue. The study was conducted in two phases, one addressing the national perspective of the North, South, and West regions, with results presented at the American Journalism Historian’s Association annual conference in 2012. The second phase, executed specifically for this dissertation, was to undertake the same analysis to the selected newspapers from the Western Virginia region, which incorporated all counties of Virginia that later were included in the state of West Virginia. Applying a focus on the dynamic process of frame-changing—reframing the core topic by emphasizing different attributes at different times within the period— the study sought to identify shifting patterns that indicate legitimization of this intrastate rift as a national agenda issue. The analysis was applied to coverage from four regions of the country, North, South, West, and Western Virginia at a time when there were contradictory sentiments between and within those regions.

Content analyzing press coverage, the study used a two-dimensional measurement scheme as a systematic way of examining frame-changing. Further analysis included that of frames used to descriptively characterize the actions undertaken as part of the Western Virginia movement. Additionally the study examined whether frame change patterns in the regions of study followed similar patterns.
Method

This study analyzed all articles meeting the search criteria that were published in the selected newspapers during the period beginning January 1, 1861, and ending December 31, 1861. During the period the region of Western Virginia went from being an integrated part of the Virginia state government seated in Richmond, to legitimizing itself and Wheeling as the seat of the Virginia state government, then to declaring itself a separate state within the Union. While official acceptance into the Union would require another year of U.S. legislative and executive decision-making, the course was set and confirmed by the leaders of the movement and the people of the new state within the one year studied.

Newspapers in the North, South and West to be studied were selected based on location and partisan affiliation or persuasion. The sample included two newspapers—one each affiliated or publishing sentiments aligned with the Republican and Democrat party—from each of the North, South and West regions. Medium to large circulation and existence of a full set of the published editions also were factors in making the selection.

The six newspapers selected were the Milwaukee Sentinel (Republican) and Cincinnati Enquirer (Democrat) representing the West; New York Daily Tribune (Republican) and Philadelphia Public Ledger (Northern Democrat) representing the North; Richmond Dispatch (Democrat) and Richmond Whig (Whig) representing the South.

Newspapers in Western Virginia to be studied were selected based on the number of extant copies without consideration of partisan affiliation. Thirty newspapers were
identified for which extant copies were available. Eight of those newspapers had only one extant copy and were excluded from this study. All extant copies of the remaining twenty-two newspapers were reviewed; fourteen newspapers contained content meeting search criteria.


Full-text keyword searches were completed on all publications for the period using keywords and terms: Western Virginia, Wheeling, reauthorized state, new Virginia, West Virginia, Kanawha. During the searches advertisements, price and market articles, articles about the progress or movements of the Civil War and other local articles that did not specifically include news about the activities pertinent to the movement toward separation were excluded. The final data set contained 970 items, 315 specific to the study of North, South, and West regions and 655 specific to study of the newspapers of Western Virginia.

Coding

Each item was coded on eight variables. Descriptive variables included media source, date of publication, page, and origin of news source.

Coding categories for the space variable were (1) Individual: if the item was primarily focused on the acts of individuals, the interaction among them, or descriptions
of their acts, reactions, or background information. (2) Community: if the item was primarily about a specific group or neighborhood. Groups may include political parties, citizens of a county or town, churches, etc. (3) Regional: If the item was primarily about the Wheeling area, the western Virginia region as a whole, or the State of Virginia. (4) Societal: If the item focused on concerns, events, or discussions with nation-wide interests, such as constitutionality, abolishment of slavery or other border states following a similar path toward Unionism. (5) International: If the item focused on or was reported by other countries, related phenomena or social problems seen in other countries, or reported on the interaction between multiple countries (the Confederacy was not considered another country for this purpose).

Coding categories for the time variable were (1) Past: If the item focused on previous events with no direct linkage to the key event, analysis with a historical perspective, or editorial pieces based on past experience. (2) Present: If the item focused on events or developments surrounding the actions to separate western Virginia from Virginia, immediate consequences of the event, or current social phenomena. (3) Future: If the item focused on the long-term effects of the event, suggestions for solutions, or actions to be taken.4

Coding categories for the characterization variable were: (1) Traitorous: Acting as traitors or treasonous to the parent state of Virginia and/or to the Confederacy. (2) Loyal Unionists: Being loyal to and/or supporting the Union above all other allegiances. (3) Other: Fitting no other category provided; neutral was included in this category. (4) Loyal Virginians: being loyal to and or supporting the parent state of Virginia above all other allegiances.
Coding categories for the main topic/angle variable were: (1) Slavery: Covered primarily in terms of whether slavery should be legal or illegal or was morally right or wrong. (2) State Economics: Covered primarily in terms of the economics and/or tax representation within the state of Virginia. (3) Covered primarily in terms of the legality of the political actions taken or the political consequences of those actions. (4) Patriotism: Covered primarily in terms of loyalty and patriotism (or lack thereof) to a cause or national ideology of government. (5) State Expediency: Covered primarily in terms of the steps needed to declare and approve statehood within the Union. (6) Covered primarily in other terms--used to describe a story with multiple topics.

Intercoder reliability was determined by pretest conducted with three coders. Scott’s $pi$ was .924, considerably sufficiently high to preclude use of multiple coders. The universe for the study was coded by the author. Because a full census of articles was conducted, no tests of statistical significance were performed.

Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>WV</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T raitorous</strong></td>
<td>2 (.6)</td>
<td>53 (16.8)</td>
<td>4 (1.3)</td>
<td>15 (2)</td>
<td>74 (7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L oyal Unionist</strong></td>
<td>96 (30.5)</td>
<td>32 (10.2)</td>
<td>49 (15.6)</td>
<td>436 (67)</td>
<td>613 (63.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O ther</strong></td>
<td>22 (7)</td>
<td>23 (7.3)</td>
<td>7 (2.2)</td>
<td>179 (27)</td>
<td>231 (23.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L oyal Virginian</strong></td>
<td>1 (.3)</td>
<td>24 (7.5)</td>
<td>2 (.6)</td>
<td>25 (4)</td>
<td>52 (5.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T otal</strong></td>
<td>121 (12.5)</td>
<td>132 (13.6)</td>
<td>62 (6.5)</td>
<td>655 (67.4)</td>
<td>970 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 2
Coverage by Region for Main Topic Variable – count (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>WV</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slavery</td>
<td>7 (2.2)</td>
<td>4 (1.3)</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>4 (.6)</td>
<td>18 (1.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>12 (3.8)</td>
<td>13 (4.1)</td>
<td>4 (1.3)</td>
<td>43 (6.6)</td>
<td>72 (7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political/Legal</td>
<td>63 (20)</td>
<td>51 (16.2)</td>
<td>29 (9.2)</td>
<td>325 (49.6)</td>
<td>468 (48.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriotism</td>
<td>22 (7)</td>
<td>42 (13.3)</td>
<td>21 (6.7)</td>
<td>135 (20.6)</td>
<td>220 (22.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11 (3.5)</td>
<td>18 (5.7)</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>148 (22.6)</td>
<td>180 (18.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Expediency</td>
<td>6 (1.9)</td>
<td>4 (1.3)</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>12 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>121 (12.5)</strong></td>
<td><strong>132 (13.6)</strong></td>
<td><strong>62 (6.4)</strong></td>
<td><strong>655 (67.5)</strong></td>
<td><strong>970 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3
Coverage by Region for Wheeling Intelligencer Attribution – count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>WV</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attributions</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Region</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>AVG 29.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Code Sheet

1. Publication Name: ____________________________________

2. Publication Date: ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___  3. Page: ____ __

   Wheeling dateline ____ □ Unknown (3) □ Assigned Reporter (4) □ Other _________ (5)

5. Describe the level of discussion of primary focus
   □ Individual (i.e. acts or interactions of individuals) (1)
   □ Community (i.e.about a group or neighborhood, including a political party) (2)
   □ Regional (i.e.about Wheeling or Western Virginia, Virginia or other state or region) (3)
   □ Societal ( i.e.focus on nation-wide interests) (4)
   □ International (i.e.related to multiple countries) (5)

6. Describe the period of time the story mainly covers
   □ Past (i.e. historical analysis or past comparisons) (1)
   □ Present (i.e. current events or developments related to Virginia separation) (2)
   □ Future (i.e. long-term effects) (3)

7. Describe how the story characterizes the actions or participants
   □ Traitorous (traitors to VA or Confederacy) (1)
   □ Loyal Unionists  (loyal to or supporting the Union) (2)
   □ Other: ___________________ (3) □ Virginia Loyalists (4)

8. Describe the main topic angle of the story
   □ Slavery (legality and morality) (1)
   □ State Economics (Virginia economics and/or tax representation) (2)
   □ Political Activity (legality of political actions taken or consequences) (3)
   □ Patriotism (about loyalty or patriotism to either side, ideology of government) (4)
   □ Other: ____________________________ (5)
Notes

3. An extant Republican newspaper in the South could not be located. The Whig party was the predecessor of the Republican Party and was therefore the Richmond Whig was used as the sample. The Richmond Whig changed partisan persuasion mid-way in the study period with the departure of the editor.
4. Chyi and McCombs, “Media Salience and the Process of Framing: Coverage of the Columbine School Shootings.” Coding categories descriptions for space and time variables were adapted from this article.
5. Intercoder reliability, based on percentage of agreement, ranged from 100 percent for variables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 to 90 percent for variable 7.