

Biographies of West Virginia statehood leaders were prepared by Marshall University Humanities Program graduate students enrolled in Dr. Billy Joe Peyton's Fall 2010 "Historical Studies" class at Marshall's South Charleston campus.

By Kelly L. Pruett

James Solace Cassady

James Solace Cassady (June 4, 2819-May 14, 1898), delegate from Fayette County in the regular session, was born in Floyd County, Virginia. In 1853, he, together with his mother, five sisters, and two brothers, Kennerly and William R. Cassady, moved to a farm on Laurel Creek, about five miles west of Fayetteville in present Fayette County, West Virginia, where he engaged in farming. February 19, 18867, he married Emily A. Young of Putnam county, West Virginia, daughter of the Rev. John Valley Young, a Union soldier. Their only child, Mabel Kirby Cassady, died May 20, 1913, at the age of forty-five. She was unmarried.

The Cassadys were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Kennerly Cassady was a local preacher of that sect. When the War of Secession began, James S. Cassady raised a company of home guards, which he placed at the order of General W.S. Rosecrans. Under a thirty-day leave from Rosecrans and bearing a petition signed by members of his own company, he was admitted too membership in the Convention. His leave was extended but he resigned on February 1, 1862, and, without formality of an election but also at the request of petitioners, was two days later succeeded by Edward W. Ryan, a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

James S. Cassady was a delegate in the Fourth West Virginia Legislature (1866). From 1866 to 1872 he was circuit clerk of Fayette County, West Virginia, and from 1867 to 1873 was

its first county superintendent of schools. He and his wife are buried in the Cassady family graveyard on Laurel Creek, Fayette County, West Virginia.

Sources:

Atkinson and Gibbens, *Prominent Men*, p. 685; Records of Fayette County, West Virginia; West Virginia First Constitutional Convention, *Debates and Journal*; War of Rebellion, *Official Records*, Series II, Vol. II, pp. 1476-1478.

Ambler, Charles H., Francis Haney Atwood and William B. Mathews, editors, *Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia (1861-1863)*, p. 96, Huntington: Gentry Brothers Printers.