

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 Wesley A. Kuemmel

Peter Godwin Van Winkle:

Peter G. Van Winkle was born in New York City on September 7, 1808, and came to Wood County in 1835, marrying into the prominent Rathbone family. Van Winkle practiced law in Parkersburg and served as a trustee to the growing city. He also held executive offices with the Northwestern Virginia Railroad that connected Parkersburg with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. (Congress)

Van Winkle represented Wood County at both the Second Wheeling Convention and the Constitutional Convention. After West Virginia statehood, Van Winkle was elected to the United States Senate. His most famous act while senator came during the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson when Van Winkle cast the only Republican vote against impeachment. He died on April 15, 1872 and was buried in Riverview Cemetery in Parkersburg. (Crutchfield)

Congress, United States. "Peter Godwin Van Winkle". *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*.

Crutchfield, Tim. "Peter Godwin Van Winkle". 2004. Find a Grave. 11/27 2010.