

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 Andrew J. Wood

Joseph S. Wheat was born on March 30, 1803. Little is known about his past other than his education was that of a Civil Engineer. He was married twice first to one of the daughters of Peter and Matilda Dyche. They had five children: Elmira, Armenia, Sarah S., Eliza, and Joseph. He married again to Elinor Newbraugh Grove, daughter of John Grove, a Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. From this marriage he had another six children: Harriet, Henry, Mary, James, John, and Alfred. He was too old for military service at the time of the Civil War but he was a strong Union supporter. In February of 1863, was captured at a lodge of the Union League in Bath and was sent to Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia. He was held until June, 1864. After the war, he began the life of a public official. He served in the 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 8th West Virginia State Legislatures and later served as a Justice of the Peace in Morgan County. He owned a tannery with his brother in St. Johns Run. In the 1870 Federal Census report, he changed his profession from a farmer to a surveyor.

Bibliography

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