

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 Hervey

James Hervey (March 29, 1819-May 1, 1888), delegate from Brooke County and a son of David and Dorothy (Ferris) Hervey, was a scion of a distinguished family which first settled in present West Virginia at Wellsburg in 1772. Henry Hervey, its founder, came directly from Ireland. Soon after his arrival he married Margaret Hutchinson, also an Irish immigrant. They were Presbyterians and their sons, James, Henry, and David, distinguished themselves as ministers of that sect. One of these sons, David Hervey, father of James, the subject of this sketch, founded the Presbyterian Church in present Wellsburg, West Virginia.

James Hervey was born in Ohio. Little is known of his education, but in due time he established himself as a lawyer in Wellsburg, where he rose to distinction in his profession. He was three times prosecuting attorney of Brooke County. He was active in the Convention. From 1868 to 1871, he was a delegate from Brooke County in the West Virginia Legislature. He married Nancy Smith, daughter of Edward Smith, a prominent physician who from 1851-1855 represented Brooke County in the Virginia General Assembly. To this union nine children were born. The sixth child, Henry C. Hervey, read law with his father and, following in his footsteps, distinguished himself as a lawyer in his home town.

Sources:

Brant and Fuller, Publishers, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley* (Madison, Wis., 1890) pp. 619-620.

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. 76, Huntington: Gentry Brothers Printers.