

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 Carolyn S. Quinlan

LEWIS RUFFNER was born on October 1, 1797, Charleston, (West) Virginia, to David and Ann (Brumbrach) Ruffner, of Kanawha Salines, Virginia. He was known as "one of the most experienced salt manufacturers in the State," but that he had little interest in political life; however, the Governor appointed him, at twenty-one years of age, as Magistrate of his district; he is said to have served "honorably" in that capacity for twenty-four years. From 1825 to 1826 he was a member of the General Assembly of Virginia; and in 1861, became a member of the Constitutional Convention to restore the Government of Virginia.

He received a commission from the State of West Virginia as Major General of the militia. The following year he became a member of the House of Delegates.

He married twice: first to Elizabeth A. D. Shrewsbury, November 2, 1826, then to Viola Knapp, of Vermont, December 3, 1843. Lewis Ruffner died in 1883 at his home in Malden (Kanawha County), West Virginia at the age of 86.

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