

A SESQUICENTENNIAL MOMENT

MARCH 23 - 29, 1862

The return of traitors, such as a former Virginia legislator suspected of spying for the Confederacy and a man described as the most loud-mouthed and meanest secessionist from the

Kanawha Valley, pushed residents of western Virginia into action during the last week of March 1862.

Union men in Mason, Putnam and Wood counties met to express their displeasure with traitors who were coming back home.

Men in Putnam County passed a resolution urging Robert T. Harvey "to take himself beyond the line of the Federal army, instanter."

That same week the *Wheeling Intelligencer* reported that Robert Turner, after returning home to Gilmer County, was arrested and imprisoned in Wheeling on suspicions of being a spy.

The *Point Pleasant Register* described Harvey as the "most loud mouthed and the meanest of all of the infamous pack of Secessionists who have disgraced the Kanawha Valley."

A resolution passed by Wood County citizens sums up the feelings of many Union supporters of the time. "We regard those

who denounce the restored Government, or strive to bring it into disrepute, as traitors in disguise and enemies to our welfare. ... Such characters cannot be tolerated."

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

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