

# A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

OCT. 19-25, 1862

## The killing of Lewis Wetzel.

On Oct. 23, 1862, John Hall walked into the Setzer, Beale & Co. mercantile store in Point Pleasant and shot Lewis Wetzel, killing the newspaper editor and county court judge almost instantly.

“We most deeply regret this terrible affair, inasmuch as it has cost the Union cause in Western Virginia, so needy at the best, the services of one patriotic man and the influence of another,” *the Wheeling Intelligencer* reported.

The two men were prominent Mason County citizens and Union supporters. Hall, a longtime county politician who lost two sons in the Civil War, presided over West Virginia’s constitutional convention in 1861-1862. Wetzel, a county court judge and acting editor

of *The Weekly Register* in Point Pleasant, represented Mason County at the Second Wheeling Convention.

Hall shot Wetzel after reading Wetzel’s editorial about an unnamed, “highly respectable citizen” who had suggested *The Weekly Register* be suppressed because it had criticized the Restored Government of Virginia. That unnamed citizen was Hall.

***The Wheeling Intelligencer***  
later lamented,  
**“Mr. Wetzel is dead and  
Mr. Hall’s remaining days  
will count for nothing.”**

*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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