



JOHN B. FLOYD.

FLOYD, John, statesman, b. in Jefferson county, Va., in 1770; d. at Sweet Springs, Va., 16 Aug., 1837. He served in congress from Virginia from 1817 till 1829, as a states rights Democrat, in 1829-'34 he was governor of Virginia. He was a personal friend of Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and Jackson, but became incensed by the proclamation of the latter against the nullification of South Carolina, and opposed him for his second term. South Carolina voted for Mr. Floyd for the presidency in 1832. He married Letitia, sister of Gen. Frank Preston, of Virginia.—Their son, **John Buchanan**, statesman, b. in Blacksburg, Va., 1 June, 1807; d. near Abingdon, Va., 26 Aug., 1863. He was graduated at the College of South Carolina in 1826, removed to Arkansas in 1836, and resided there three years, when he returned to Virginia and practised law in Washington county. He served in the state legislature in 1847-'9 and 1853, and was governor of Virginia in 1850-'3. He was a member of the electoral college in 1856, and a supporter of James Buchanan for the presidency, who appointed him secretary of war. He held this office from 1857 till the autumn of 1860, when, having declared for secession, he resigned, and returned to his home in Abingdon, Va. In the winter of 1861 he was indicted in Washington, on the charge of having secretly, during the latter portion of his adminis-

tration of the war department, prepared the means to aid secession leaders, dispersed the army into remote parts of the country, where the troops could not readily be conveyed to the Atlantic coast, and transferred from northern to southern arsenals 113,000 muskets; and that he was privy to the abstraction of \$870,000 in bonds from the department of the interior during the latter part of 1860. Immediately on learning of these charges, Mr. Floyd went to Washington, appeared before the court, gave bail, and demanded trial. In January, 1861, a committee of the house of representatives made an investigation, and completely exonerated Mr. Floyd from each charge of the indictment. In 1861 he was appointed brigadier-general in the Confederate army, and was engaged at the battle of Carnifex Ferry, 10 Sept., 1861. At the battle of Fort Donelson, 16 Feb., 1862, he reached the field when the engagement had begun, and found the position untenable and the Confederate army in a *cul de sac* from which nothing but the hardest fighting could extricate it. He gave orders to that effect, and, after two days' heavy fighting, succeeded in opening a way for the extrication of his troops by a movement to his left. Afterward Gen. Pillow ordered back the main body of the Confederate army which was under his command to its original position, leaving Gen. Floyd's troops without support on the ground they had gained, whereupon he retreated, with little comparative loss to his own command. Two weeks afterward Gen. Floyd was censured by Mr. Davis for this act, and relieved from command.—His wife, **Sally Buchanan**, b. near Abingdon, Va., 14 Feb., 1802; d. there, 7 May, 1879. She was the third daughter of Gen. Frank Preston, of Abingdon, granddaughter of Gen. William Campbell, who commanded at King's Mountain, and niece of Patrick Henry. Her brothers were William C. Preston, senator, and Gen. John S. Preston, of South Carolina. Gen. and Mrs. Floyd had no children, but adopted two orphan relatives—John Preston Johnson, an artillery officer of the United States army, who was killed at Contreras in the Mexican war, and Eliza, his sister, who married Judge Robert Hughes, of the United States district court, of Norfolk, Va.



JOHN BUCHANAN FLOYD.

Floyd, JOHN BUCHANAN, statesman; born in Blacksburg, Va., June 1, 1807; was admitted to the bar in 1828; practised law in Helena, Ark.; and in 1839 settled in Washington county, in his native State. He served in the Virginia legislature several terms, and was governor of the State in 1850-53. His father, John, had been governor of Virginia. In 1857 President Buchanan appointed him Secretary of War. As early as Dec. 29, 1859, according to the report of a Congressional committee, he had ordered the transfer of 65,000 percussion muskets, 40,000 muskets altered to percussion, and 10,000 percussion rifles from the armories at Springfield, Mass., and the arsenals at Watervliet, N. Y., and Watertown, Mass., to the arsenals at Fayetteville, N. C., Charleston, S. C., Augusta, Ga., Mount Vernon, Ala., and Baton Rouge, La., and these were distributed in the spring of 1860, before the meeting of the Democratic Convention at Charleston. Eleven days after the issuing of the above order, Jan. 9, 1860, Jefferson Davis introduced into the national Senate a bill "to authorize the

FLOYD, JOHN BUCHANAN

sale of public arms to the several States and Territories, and to regulate the appointment of superintendents of the national armories." Davis reported the bill from the military committee of the Senate, and, in calling it up on Feb. 21, said: "I should like the Senate to take up a little bill which I hope will excite no discussion. It is the bill to authorize the States to purchase arms from the



JOHN BUCHANAN FLOYD.

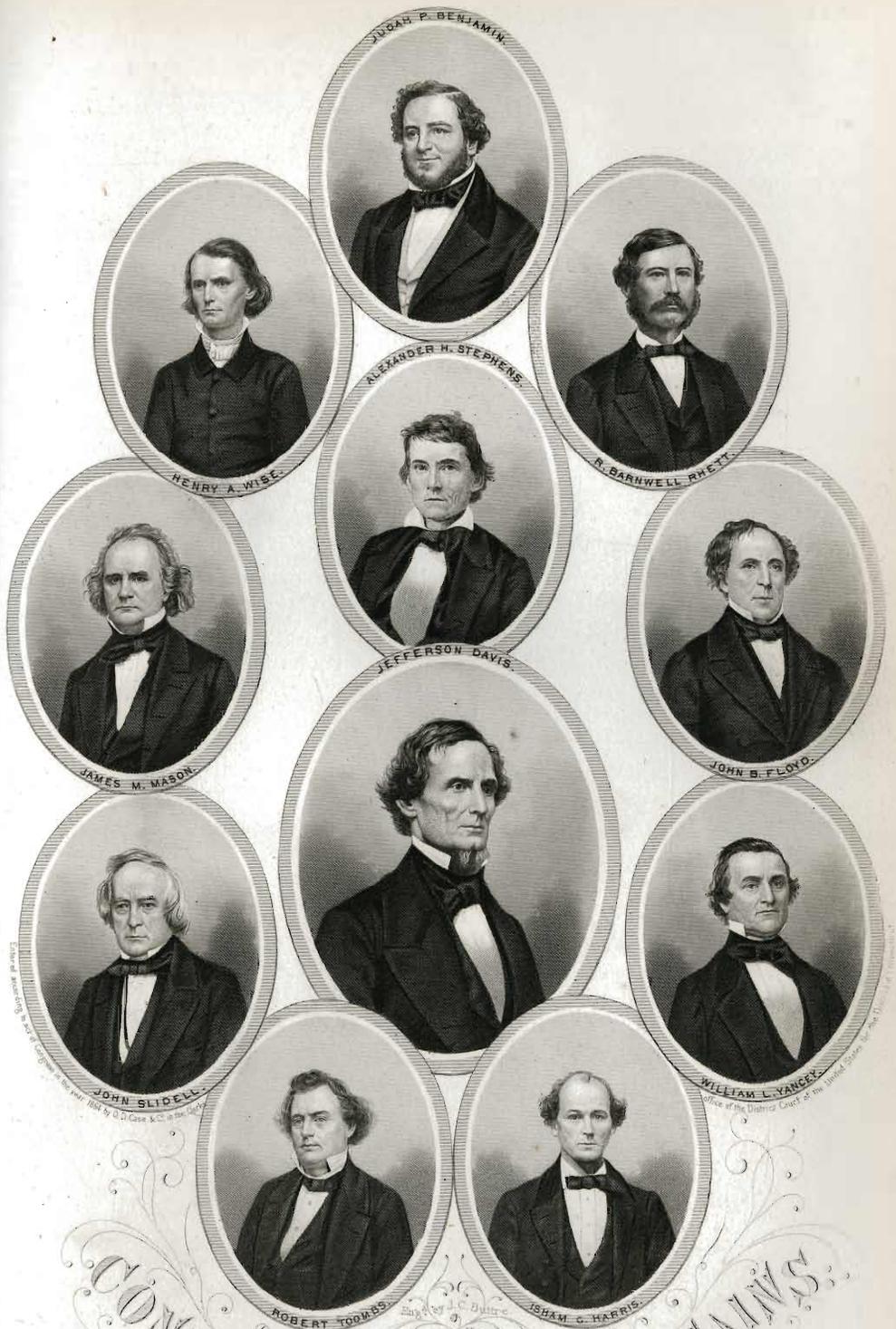
national armories. There are a number of volunteer companies wanting to purchase arms, but the States have not a sufficient supply." Senator Fessenden, of Maine, asked, Feb. 23, for an explanation of the reasons for such action. Davis replied that the Secretary of War had recommended an increase of appropriations for arming the militia, and as "the militia of the States were not militia of the United States," he thought it best for the volunteer companies of States to have arms that were uniform in case of war. Fessenden offered an amendment, March 26, that would deprive it of mischief, but it was lost, and the bill was passed by a strict party vote—twenty-nine Democrats against eighteen Republicans. It was smothered in the House of Representatives.

By a stretch of authority under an old

act of Congress (1825), Floyd sold to the States and individuals in the South over 31,000 muskets, altered from flint to percussion, for \$2.50 each. On Nov. 24, 1860, he sold 10,000 muskets to G. B. Lamar, of Georgia; and on the 16th he had sold 5,000 to Virginia. The *Mobile Advertiser* said, "During the past year 135,430 muskets have been quietly transferred from the Northern arsenal at Springfield alone to those of the Southern States. We are much obliged to Secretary Floyd for the foresight he has thus displayed in disarming the North and equipping the South for this emergency. There is no telling the quantity of arms and munitions which were sent South from other arsenals. There is no doubt but that every man in the South who can carry a gun can now be supplied from private or public sources." A Virginia historian of the war (Pollard) said, "It was safely estimated that the South entered upon the war with 150,000 small-arms of the most approved modern pattern and the best in the world." Only a few days before Floyd left his office as Secretary of War and fled to Virginia he attempted to supply the Southerners with heavy ordnance also. On Dec. 20, 1860, he ordered forty columbiads and four 32-pounders to be sent from the arsenal at Pittsburg to an unfinished fort on Ship Island, in the Gulf of Mexico; and seventy-one columbiads and seven 32-pounders to be sent from the same arsenal to an embryo fort at Galveston, Tex., which would not be ready for armament in five years. When Quartermaster Taliaferro (a Virginian) was about to send off these heavy guns, an immense public meeting of citizens, called by the mayor, was held, and the guns were retained. When Floyd fled from Washington his successor, Joseph Holt, of Kentucky, countermanded the order.

Indicted by the grand jury of the District of Columbia as being privy to the abstracting of \$870,000 in bonds from the Department of the Interior, at the close of 1860 he fled to Virginia, when he was commissioned a general in the Confederate army. In that capacity he was driven from West Virginia by General Rosecrans. The night before the surrender of FORT DONELSON (*q. v.*) he stole away in the

darkness, and, being censured by the Confederate government, he never served in the army afterwards. He died near Abingdon, Va., Aug. 26, 1863.



JUDAS P. BENJAMIN



HENRY A. WISE



ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS



R. BARNWELL RHETT



JAMES M. MASON



JEFFERSON DAVIS



JOHN B. FLOYD



JOHN SLIDELL



ROBERT TOOMBS



WILLIAM L. YANDER



ISHAM C. HARRIS

CONFEDERATE CHIEFTAINS

Published by D. D. Case & Co. in New York. Office of the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia.

ARNWELL RHETT.



JOHN B. FLOYD.