

# REVIEW

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## SECESSION IN ARKANSAS

By J. H. Atkinson

### I

Election of the Members of the Secession Convention;  
First Session, March 4 to March 21, 1861.

Soon after the election of Lincoln in the fall of 1860, South Carolina passed an ordinance of secession. Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas followed in rapid succession. The people of Arkansas watched the course of events and wondered what action they should take. Some favored secession, others wanted a state convention to decide, still others were for a Southern convention, while some opposed any action.

On November 15, the State Legislature met in regular session. In his inaugural address the newly-elected governor, Henry M. Rector, advocated secession but the Legislature took no action. There was, however, considerable agitation in the newspapers and by public speakers. Besides the governor, Senator R. W. Johnson, Congressmen E. W. Gantt and T. C. Hindman were advocates of secession. Much pressure was placed on the Legislature to call a convention on secession.

On January 15 after four states, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida, had passed ordinances of secession, the Legislature passed a bill calling an election for February 18 to decide if there should be a secession convention, and also providing for the electing of delegates to such a convention in case the vote should be favorable. The result was a majority of 11,586 for the convention in a total vote of 43,238. The number of delegates was to be equal to the number of members in the lower house of the Legislature which was at that time seventy-five.

The following is the list of delegates elected, by counties:

Arkansas.....	James L. Totten
Ashley.....	M. L. Hawkins
Benton.....	A. W. Dinsmore, H. Jackson
Bradley.....	Josiah Gould
Carroll.....	W. W. Watkins, E. H. Hobbs
Clark.....	H. Flanagan
Calhoun.....	P. H. Echols
Columbia.....	M. P. Smoot, L. C. Wallace