

Biography of Captain Jackson V. Parker:

Jackson V. Parker was the 5th of 11 children of Ruel Parker and Emily Hatch-Tenney Parker. Between 1850 and 1860 he traveled during the summer months with his father from North Clarendon, VT to Newport, MN, building a future homestead. At the beginning of the Civil War he resided in Brandon, Vt with his wife Julia Clark-Parker. He enlisted at the age of 26.

Jackson was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant of Company B, Seventh Vermont Infantry Regiment, January 6, 1862. He was promoted 1st Lieutenant, December 9, 1862, replacing Darwin A. Smalley, who had been promoted to Captain of Company A. Jackson was subsequently promoted to Captain on October 22, 1863, replacing Captain William Cronan, who resigned May 30, 1863. He mustered out with the regiment March 14, 1866, and returned to Brandon where he lived until his death.

Obviously recently returned from leave in Vermont, Jackson wrote to his father, in Newport, Minnesota (near St. Paul), on June 20, 1864, from Barrancas, Florida, where the regiment had been assigned since November 1863. In mid-August, 1864, the regiment had re-enlisted and gone home to Vermont for their veteran's furlough. When their furlough expired at the end of September, they were sent to New Orleans, arriving there on October 13, 1864. Jackson wrote to his parents on December 24th, 1864.

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Barrancus, Fla
June 20th 1864

Dear Father,

I arrived here on the 28th of last month having been forty-eight days in all since I left home to join my regiment. I got almost disgusted with the service there being so much delay and lack of interest on the part of officers in dispatching business. This procrastination was the reason of my being so long in making the trip. You cannot imagine how expensive it is traveling these times. I could not get board anywhere for less than three to five dollars per day. After I reached here I made an estimate of the expenses I had been to and I found that I was out about four hundred dollars. I felt poor indeed and made up my mind at once to be mustered into the service again and now I am a veteran and three years more of service is before me. God is (?) can only tell whether I shall be spared to see my friends again. I know our days of garrison soldiering are about over. Our regiment-three fourths of them have reenlisted and expect to leave here for Vermont soon. I am to remain here with our new recruits until it is decided where the regiment is to go and where ever this is I am to take the recruits. We are now assigned to Gen. Sherman's army but Gov. Smith of Vermont is making an effort to have us joint the army of the Potomac I believe. I have no choice in our destination choosing from the two armies. My company have all reenlisted but four Irishman. When I look at my wife and little boys pictures I sometimes regret that I have reenlisted. I feel that I am loosing much comfort and sacrificing my best feelings in staying in the army. The only satisfaction I can get in remaining is if I should serve my country faithfully to the end of this war it will always be a proud thought to me to the end of (?).

You say in your letter that you feel you are failing. It must be a gloomy thought to one when they arrive to that age to realize that they have but a few short days to remain here what that their exit from this world is close at hand when they will have to bid adieu to all friends and works which they have had in life. I hope you still cling to your faith as regards the future if you do I know you are reconciled and receive support from it. One who believes in change and progress cannot fear the other now. I should be glad to live near you and mother once more for I feel that I would be of some service and add some comfort to your declining years. But I say to you both now if circumstances prevent this I wish to be held in remembrance by you both as your grateful and dutiful son and one who will ever cherish your memory with respect and veneration.

Three union officers arrived here this week having made their escape from prison in Macon Georgia. Lieut Ross* of my company was confined in the same room with them and had the same chance to escape but he considered the undertaking to desperate.

(to be continued)

* Note: 1st Lieutenant George Ross, of Brandon, had been taken prisoner February 9, 1864. He would later be paroled March 1, 1865.

Dec. 24, 1864

Dear Parents,

I wrote to you a long time ago and I have waited patiently for an answer to my letter, but I begin to think that you haven't received it. I also wrote to Sarah and as yet I have received no reply from her. I think it very singular indeed that none of my relatives in Minnesota write to me. I am very anxious to hear from you all and hope you will keep me posted in reference to your wellness if nothing more.

Our regiment is now doing provat general duty in this city. We are very pleasantly situated and the duties of the officers are very light. In fact I have hardly anything to do only to attend to drip, courtesy and personal appearance. It makes it very expensive indeed when so much attention is required to outside appearances. Our position here, though at the present time, compels us to drip (?) and conform to formalities that seems almost ridiculous. The cheapest board that we can get here now is \$25 per month. I expect we are permanently fixed here now and may stay the rest of our term of service.

Our regiment has the reputation of being the cleanest regiment in this deoprtment and I do not think that they can be easily beat in the execution of their duties and discipline. New Orleans is very dull at the present time. Trade has been placed under such rigid restrictions it has about bust up all business and taking into consideration that the troops here have not been busier in 8 months, it makes affairs look rather blue. There does not appear to be much virtue or morality amongst the people here as near as my observation will permit me to finding. The whole

community, most seem to adopt the free love principals and go in all hands and have a good time. With money plenty I think most any attractable young man could flirt to his satisfaction with the most women in the city.

It would surprise you to see the mixture of the races; amalgamation has done its work, promiscuously and especially with the colored here, I have seen some mixed blood Negroes who are certainly the most beautiful looking women I ever saw and especially where the white blood is Spanish. Many of this class of people and such a majority of them were (?) before this war command. There is no Sunday here, that is like Sunday in N. E. it is a kind of a (?) day. All places of amusements are kept open and every body looks upon Sunday as if looking forward to the coming of the 4th of July or Christmas.

It would surprise you to go down to the French market on the Sabbath day. I was down there a short time ago and I never want to go again. It seemed as though all nations of the world have congregated together there, have brought with them all of their effects, and emptied them out for ever. Sunday is the principle day for the French to do their marketing and they all congregate at their market and make purchases for the week.

I shall be glad when this war is over so we can return to our homes and settle down. Romance, Novelties, and constant excitement soon wear out and leaves a man old. I rather be in business and have my friends around me then to follow a life of romance and excitement. I wish you would let me know if Seldson has paid you. I hear that (?) has although I asked you to wait upon him until I could pay him what I was owing him.

I am in excellent health and good spirits. I hope to hear from you soon. I hope you will give me the whole particulars about all of our friends in Minnesota. Remember me to Sarah and John to Hannah, Kate, Charlie, and Mother in particular. I should like to see you all, and hope I may; but it is uncertain. I shall probably remain in the service during the war and if I live to return to my family is about all that I expect.

I remain your affectionate son, Jackson

P.S.

Direct to
JV Parker
Captain 7th RT, VT Vols
New Orleans, L.A.