

WILLIAM JOHN PARKER | ELIZABETH ANN DANIEL

On July 12, 1865, **William John Parker (1841–1921)**, a 24-year-old widower, was married to his second wife (he had three wives), **Elizabeth Ann Daniel (1839–1898)**, by Reverend Boyd in Lauderdale County, near Meridian, Mississippi.

William John Parker was born in Alabama or Georgia, and lived in several east Mississippi communities. He is a somewhat enigmatic figure, known to us today mostly through public records of his life and death.

In 1860, at age 19, he married his first wife, Elizabeth Sanders (1837–1861), who died at the childbirth of her firstborn, Elizabeth Thomas Parker (1861–1914). Later in her life, Elizabeth Thomas Parker married Thomas Lamon. They had no children and she died in 1914 at age 53.

William J. Parker joined the Confederate Army in June 1861 in Kemper County, Mississippi, and served for three years and eleven months of the war.¹ He was a private in Company I of the 24th Regiment, which surrendered on April 26, 1865, in Durham Station, North Carolina.

In the 1870 census, at age 29, he is listed as a farm laborer who owned no property and lived in Chickasaw County, Mississippi (just north of Clay County). In the 1880 census, at age 39, William John Parker was still residing in Chickasaw County and is listed as a farmer and operator of a grist mill. He is enumerated with his wife, Elizabeth Ann Daniel Parker, and two daughters, one of whom is my grandmother **Jonnie Mae Parker (1871–1946)**. Also listed in their household in 1880 is a 22-year-old boarder named Rufus M. Lamon.²

Elizabeth Ann Daniel Parker, William John Parker's second wife, died in 1898, at age 62. On May 13, 1900, nearly age 60, William John Parker married again. His third wife, Susan Rebecca Stuart Parnell, was a widow with a large family.³ William John Parker adopted his new wife's children. They lived in Scooba, Mississippi, in Kemper County, where he was a deacon in the Baptist church.

In the 1900 census, dated June 1, 1900, he is listed as a carpenter who owned his home free of mortgage in Kemper County.



William John Parker with members of his family, c. 1909. Back row: James Charles Bryan Jr., William Gilmore, Jonnie Mae Parker, Jewel Gilmore, George Dewey Bryan, Earl Gilmore (on knee), William J. Parker, John H. Bryan Sr. (on knee), Susan Parnell Parker, Gladys Gilmore, Lady B. Gilmore, Joseph Gilmore, Eula Parker Gilmore. Front row: Zula Gilmore, W. B. Bryan, Paul Gilmore, Franklin J. Bryan, Alton Gilmore.

We have a circa 1909 photograph of William J. Parker with my one-year-old father sitting on his left knee, and with his third wife, Susan Rebecca Parnell, standing just behind my father. Also in the photo are William John Parker's two daughters, one son-in-law, and 13 grandchildren. Like my great-grandfather, I have 13 grandchildren with exactly the same gender mix, nine boys and four girls.

In May 1921, at age 80, William John Parker died in West Point, Mississippi, while living with his daughter. His death certificate was signed by my grandmother Jonnie Mae Parker Bryan. His death was attributed to mitral regurgitation complicated with inflammation. He is buried at Cedar Ridge Baptist Church near DeKalb, Mississippi, in Kemper County, along with his second wife, my great-grandmother Elizabeth Ann Daniel Parker.⁴

In 1941 there was a memorial service held to honor the 100th anniversary of the birth of William John Parker.⁵ He was obviously revered by his family, for his memory evoked this unique event in the annals of my family history.

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1. WILLIAM J. PARKER'S CIVIL WAR SERVICE

William J. Parker (1841-1921) joined an infantry company called the Kemper Rifles on July 8, 1861, at age 20. Two months later, on September 10, 1861, he mustered at Marion Station (near Meridian, Mississippi) on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and camped there with his regiment until November 22, 1861, when his regiment was ordered to report to General Robert E. Lee (1807-1870) in Savannah, Georgia.

During the war, W. J. Parker and his troops traveled extensively around the southeastern United States. They moved by train and on foot. On one occasion during three months in 1862, they recorded 800 miles of marching from Chattanooga into Kentucky and back to Knoxville.

William John Parker's major combat actions occurred in middle Tennessee and northwest Georgia. He fought in the Battle of Chickamauga (September 1863), in major conflicts around Chattanooga (October-November 1863), in defense of Atlanta (1864), and in the Tennessee Campaign at the Battles of Franklin and Nashville (November-December 1864).

William J. Parker held the rank of private throughout the war, serving in Company I of the 24th Mississippi Infantry Regiment. He surrendered with his regiment at Durham Station, Orange County, North Carolina, on April 26, 1865. He was almost 24 years old. His Civil War path is depicted here.



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SUMMARY OF W. J. PARKER'S WHEREABOUTS DURING HIS CIVIL WAR SERVICE

1861

September to November In camp at Marion Station, Mississippi

December In camp at Savannah, Georgia

1862

January to March In three camps in northeast Florida

April to July In northeast Mississippi
(Siege of Corinth—April 28-30)

In camp at Tupelo, Mississippi

April to November East Tennessee and Kentucky on foot
(Battle of Perryville, Kentucky—October 8)

December to after April 1863 Became ill at Shelbyville, Tennessee

December 8 Sent on sick leave by surgeon's order

1863

Latter half of year Around Chattanooga, Tennessee, and northwest Georgia
(Battle of Chickamauga—September 18-20)
(Siege of Chattanooga—October/November)
(Battle of Lookout Mountain—November 24)
(Battle of Missionary Ridge—November 25)

1864

February to October Defending Atlanta
Camped in Dalton, Georgia
(Battle of Resaca—May 13-15)
(Battle of New Home Church—May 25-26)
(Battle of Ezra Church—July 28)
(Battle of Jonesboro—August 31)

November to December In the Tennessee Campaign
(Battle of Franklin—November 30)
(Battle of Nashville—December 15-16)

1865

January to March In camp again at Tupelo, Mississippi

April 26 Surrender at Durham Station, North Carolina



This 19th-century Currier and Ives print (along with 15 others) has hung in the entrance hall of my home for over 80 years. It depicts the surrender of General Joe Johnston (1807-1891) to General William T. Sherman (1820-1891) on April 26, 1865. My great-grandfather William John Parker was among the surrendering Confederate troops.

2. RUFUS M. LAMON

In the 1880 census in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, a Rufus M. Lamon (1860- after 1920) is enumerated in the household of William John Parker (1841-1921).

The census entry is as follows:

Lamon, Rufus M., white; male; age: 22; boarder; single; occupation: farm laborer; is the person on the day of the enumerator's visit [sick or temporarily disabled], so as to be unable to attend to business or duties well; place of birth: Mississippi; place of birth of father: Tennessee; place of birth of mother: Alabama.

Rufus M. Lamon is presumably a relative (perhaps brother) of Thomas Lamon, who married William John Parker's daughter, Elizabeth Sanders (1861-1914).

Rufus M. Lamon later married Josie Parmer (1870-after 1920), the daughter of Jane I. Burnett (1846-before 1900), my great-great-aunt (sister of Sarah Elizabeth Burnett Bryan [1838-1915]). Rufus had a son named Louis L. Lamon (1898-1986), who was my father's second cousin. Louis Lamon had a son, Rufe Lamon (1923-1997), my third cousin.

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3. SUSAN REBECCA STUART PARNELL PARKER: THE THIRD WIFE OF WILLIAM JOHN PARKER

On May 13, 1900, William John Parker (1841-1921), my 59-year-old great-grandfather and a two-time widower, married his third wife, Susan Rebecca Stuart Parnell (1862-1944). She was a 37-year-old widow of Maberry Bryant Parnell (1852-1896).

In the 1900 census, William J. Parker is recorded as a carpenter and the head of a household in Kemper County, Mississippi (Scooba). Those enumerated in his household are Susan R. Parker, age 47,* married zero years; Tom Parker, age 22; Delena Parker, age 20; Allie Parker, age 15; Nellie Parker, age 12; and Minnie Parker, age eight.

Picture after 1905. Seated from left to right: William John Parker, Susan Rebecca Parnell Parker. Standing from left to right: Tom Parnell, Nell Parnell, Dell Parnell Clark, and Daniell Theodore Clark. This picture was given to us by Jean Beazley Guice (b. 1944), who is the great-granddaughter of Susan Rebecca Parnell Parker. Photo courtesy of Jean Beazley Guice.



William John Parker and Susan Rebecca Parnell Parker are depicted in the photograph on the opposite page in front of a residence in Scooba, Mississippi, around 1908. We do not know if the house was owned by the Parker family, Parnell family, or neither. The house was reported to be haunted.

*This is an error; she was 37 years old.



William John Parker with his third wife's family, c. 1908. From left to right: A man with a cow (unidentified), Nellie Gray Parnell, Vivian Beazley, Allie Mae Parnell Beazley (Mrs. Jefferson Davis Beazley), Kathleen Beazley, Minnie Parnell, and Betty Parnell.

Behind the fence from left to right: William Parker (second husband of Susan Rebecca Stuart Parnell), Susan Rebecca Stuart Parnell Parker, Delena "Dell" Hope Parnell Clark, and Daniell Theodore Clark.

In the 1910 census, William John Parker is listed in Kemper County as the head of a household that included his wife, Susan R. Parker, and 18-year-old Minnie Parnell. In the 1920 census, Susan Parker is listed as the 56-year-old head of household in Kemper County. She was not living with William John Parker at that time. William John Parker lived the last years of his life (he died in 1921) with his daughters (Eula Lee Gilmore and Jonnie Mae Bryan) in West Point, Mississippi.

We have an application for a Confederate widow's pension by Mrs. Susan Rebecca Parker in 1940. In that application, she attested that she was the widow of William J.

Parker. Susan Rebecca Stuart Parnell Parker died in 1944 and is buried with her first husband.



A joint tombstone for Susan Rebecca Parnell Parker and her first husband.

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4. WILLIAM J. PARKER DIES

William John Parker (1841-1921), my great-grandfather, died on May 7, 1921, at the home of my grandmother Jonnie Mae Parker Bryan (1871-1946). He was attended by a local doctor, J. W. Unger.

He was buried in the Cedar Ridge Baptist Cemetery in Kemper County. Near his tombstone is the gravestone of his second wife, Elizabeth Ann Daniel (1839-1898), who died almost 23 years earlier.



The inscription reads: W.J. Parker / May 4, 1841 / May 7, 1921.



The inscription reads: Elizabeth Ann / wife of / W.J. Parker / Born / Jan. 1839 / Died / Aug. 19, 1898.

5. WILLIAM JOHN PARKER IS REMEMBERED IN A UNIQUE EVENT

Parker Memorial Rites Conducted

May 4 - 1946

Porterville — Memorial services were held in Center Ridge church near here by descendants of the late W. J. Parker. A reunion was held commemorating the centennial birthday of the deceased. Flowers were placed on the graves of the late Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Parker, and shrubbery and flowers planted on the plot.

Among those participating in the event were: Two daughters, Mrs. J. G. Gilmore and Mrs. Janmie Bryan, West Point; two sisters, Mrs. Susan Newell of Sucarnooche, and another from West Point; grandchildren, George Bryan, Starkville; J. C. Bryan, West Point; William and Earl Gilmore, Jackson; and one great grandson, Billy Gilmore, Jackson.

Other relatives included: Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Carnathan, Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Lamon, Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Hudnall, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Lamon, C. B. Parmer, Neal D. Parmer, Louis Parmer, Savond Lamon, Ruby Hudnall, Norma Parmer, all of Porterville; Mrs. Margaret McDade, DeKalb; Mrs. W. J. McDade, Miss Elizabeth McDade, Sucarnooche; and Mrs. S. David, Porterville; Mrs. J. M. Long and family, Sanders Mill.

A delicious lunch was enjoyed at noon on tables on the church lawn.

This newspaper account records a memorial service in honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of William John Parker (1841-1921). The penciled notation is an error, for the event occurred on May 4, 1941.