

sat on their horses side by side facing the Confederate camps (who were already busy packing their guns and stacking their arms preliminary to giving their parole) and conversed for more than an hour, during which many minor details of the surrender were settled, as I can testify from the character of the orders I was directed to make out, all tending to simplify the forms of procedure, so that General Lee's Army might be permitted to disband without unnecessary delay.

N.Y. Mch. 1894

*Ely S. Parker
Br. Army Gen. late U.S.A.*

As an evidence of the scarcity of writing paper at General Lee's headquarters, it will be observed by comparing the torn edges of letter marked (B and D) that, though dated on different days, they were written upon the same sheet of note paper torn down the center.

(COPY)

(Civil War) Parker, Ely Samuel (1828-1895) **Typescript Draft of General Ely Samuel Parker's Narrative, of the Surrender at Appomattox, Signed by Parker, and Dated New York, March 1894** folio, 14 typescript – carbon pages, on rectos only, lacking the text of page one of Parker's account, accounting for 19 lines of text in the printed version, supplied here in facsimile, the last page is signed and dated by Parker.

Typescript Draft of General Ely Samuel Parker's narrative of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, written by Grant's military secretary who wrote out the official copy of the terms of surrender. Signed and dated by Parker in March 1894. The papers offered here contain the text of Parker's narrative describing the events of April 6 – 9th, 1865, the communications between Grant and Lee and the meeting between the two generals at the home of Mr. McLean and the discussion which led to the production of the document called "The Terms of Lee's Surrender," which ended the war, and which Parker himself copied in his own hand. There are also typescript copies of the correspondence between Grant and Lee arranging the meetings which led to the culminating event of, and the end of, the Civil War.

The narrative's only printed appearance was in a *Souvenir of the dinner, given at the Waldorf, on April 27th, 1893, commemorating the birth of General Grant.*, printed in New York in 1893. OCLC locates three copies of this souvenir: University Club Library, U. S. Military Academy, West Point, and Princeton. OCLC locates in addition, the copy of Charles H. T. Collis, the banquet's chairman, at George Washington University, specially bound, and containing additional mss material.

We have not located any other draft of Parker's narrative in the online finding aids of institutional repositories of his papers, i.e. American Philosophical Society, the Newberry, et cetera.

Ely Samuel Parker was born on the Tonawanda Reservation in New York State, the son of Seneca chief William Parker and Elizabeth Johnson. One of only a few formally educated Tonawanda Senecas, Parker served as an interpreter and tribal representative from age fourteen. He entered Cayuga Academy at Aurora, New York, in October 1845, to prepare for college; he left early in 1846 to accompany tribal leaders to Washington, D.C., for meetings with the president and other officials, one of many such trips he made on the tribe's behalf during a lengthy but ultimately successful fight to retain their reservation.

Parker read the law but was prevented from practicing because, as an Indian, he was not recognized as a citizen of the United States. In 1849 he tried civil engineering. He was successful at this and was appointed first assistant engineer by the New York State Canal Board in 1851 shortly after the Iroquois Confederacy had installed him as a grand sachem of the Six Nations. By 1857 he was employed by the U.S. Treasury Department as a supervisor of construction of federal buildings in the Midwest where, in 1860, he met and became friends with Ulysses S. Grant. He lost his job to a political appointee in 1861 and returned to New York.

Despite Parker's experience as an officer in the New York militia, his attempts to obtain a commission in the Union army during the early part of the Civil War were thwarted by racial prejudice and his noncitizen status. Finally in 1863 he was commissioned as a captain and sent to Vicksburg, Mississippi. There he soon was assigned to the personal staff of General U.S. Grant. As military secretary, he witnessed Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House and wrote out the official copy of the terms of surrender.

In 1867 Parker married an eighteen-year-old white woman, Minnie Orton Sackett; their only child was born in 1878.

While on Grant's staff Parker became involved in Indian affairs at the national level, serving on two Indian commissions and helping to negotiate treaties with several tribes. As president, Grant chose Parker to head the Office of Indian Affairs, thus making him the first Native American commissioner. In April 1869 Parker resigned his commission as brigadier general, U. S. Army, to assume his new position. Although he served ably as commissioner, successfully implementing Grant's Peace Policy, he was charged with defrauding the government in his purchase of Indian supplies. A congressional investigation cleared his name, but the criticism and challenge to his integrity deeply offended him. He resigned as commissioner effective 1 August 1871.

Thereafter Parker enjoyed some success in the business world until bad investments and his insistence on making good the defaulted bond of an embezzler cost him most of his fortune. In 1876 he went to work for the Police Board of Commissioners in New York City, a job he held until his death in Fairfield, Connecticut.

Parker apparently was subject to occasional drinking bouts, but they were not a significant factor in either his personal or professional life. A learned gentleman and a man of honor, Parker braved racial prejudice to achieve success in white society. – *American National Biography*, vol. 17, pp. 18-19.

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