

SILAS CHAUNCEY PARKER.

No preliminary paragraph is necessary to introduce the well known lawyer and citizen whose name appears above to the citizens of Mansfield, Ohio, among whom he has gone in and out as a fellow citizen for more than fifteen years, and to many of whom he has been known as a pioneer in Ohio and as a soldier of the Civil war for a much longer period. Mr.

Parker was born in Holmes county, Ohio, in 1831, a son of Cephas Parker, a native of Oneida county, New York, who settled on a farm in Holmes county in 1816. William Parker, the father of Cephas, a pioneer in the hop-growing district of Oneida county, New York, was a first cousin of the Rev. Theodore Parker, D. D., the famous New England divine. The Parkers came to New England in the Mayflower, and the family has since produced many sons who have proven themselves worthy of their Puritan ancestry. Captain John Parker, great-grandfather of the subject of this sketch, led the minute men at Lexington. Mr. Parker's mother, Sarah Priest, was also of a distinguished English family. She was a daughter of James Loudon Priest, Jr., who was born in Massachusetts January 1, 1771, a son of James Loudon Priest, a native of England, whose mother was a Loudon of the same family as the one made famous in the annals of Virginia. James Loudon Priest, Jr., a civil engineer, about 1805 took his family to French Creek, Pennsylvania, from Onondaga county, New York, and from French Creek he removed, in 1807 or '08 to Sandusky county, Ohio. In the spring of that year William Priest, the eldest son, aged thirteen years, with a fifteen-year-old boy as his only companion, drove from French Creek, Pennsylvania, over the mountains and through the wilderness to Sandusky county and cleared and planted a patch of corn, so that the family might have provisions upon their arrival. The family consisted of the father and mother and fifteen children and the aged grandfather, who came of a family of large land-holders in England imbued with the idea that the farmer was the important man in the community. James Loudon Priest, Jr., by removing from Sandusky county in 1808 showed his good judgment of land when he located on one thousand acres where Loudonville, Ashland county, Ohio, now stands. It was on this journey that the mother of our subject was born, as described in some verses composed by him.

Mr. Priest laid out the town and named it after his grandmother Loudon. He was the first justice of the peace in Lake township and filled the office eleven years. He also laid out all the roads leading from Loudonville. He died in 1823, aged fifty-two years, and was buried there. Ten of his children grew to manhood or womanhood. In 1790 he married Polina Chauncey, of Long Island, a first cousin of Captain Isaac Chauncey, chairman of the naval committee at Washington in 1885. They were descendants of Charles Chauncey, who was born in England in 1695 and came to America in 1720, and later became the president of Harvard College. Polina (Chauncey) Priest died in 1859, at the age of eighty six, and there were at that time eighty of her grand and great-grandchildren living.

Silas Chauncey Parker received his education in the public schools of Holmes county, the academy at Loudonville, and for one year, in 1850-51, at the Wesleyan University at Delaware, Ohio. He returned to Holmes county and taught school until 1854, and then drove from Loudonville across the plains to California, where he remained four years. Of all his eventful life this overland trip is referred to by him as entailing the greatest hardships and calling for the greatest nerve. He was farming and teaching in Ashland county, 1858-62. In the year last mentioned he enlisted from Holmes county in the Thirty-second Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, with which organization he was in active service until the end of the Civil war. He was commissary sergeant and after the siege of Atlanta was promoted to be color-bearer for gallant conduct. He was in the following and other hard-contested battles, sieges and important military movements,—Fort Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hill (where he was wounded), all the fighting about Vicksburg, in the Meridian expedition under Sherman (in which he was again wounded), Peach Tree Creek, all the battles about Atlanta and at the surrender of Johnston near Raleigh, and participated in the grand review at Washington in 1865, and was discharged from the service at Louisville, Kentucky.

From 1865 to 1868 Mr. Parker was engaged in mercantile business in Holmes county. He then located at Perryville and in 1876 was admitted to the bar of Ashland county. For nine years he was a justice of the peace at Perrysville and for two years superintendent of schools. After having lived at Perrysville for several years he located at Mansfield in 1885, and has since lived there in the enjoyment of a successful law practice. In all that pertains to the welfare of Mansfield he takes great interest. He has seen his children grow to manhood or womanhood there and start in life for themselves with every promise of useful and successful careers, and he has devoted a good deal of time and labor to Grand Army matters. He has prepared a roster of McLaughlin Post and biographical sketches of many of its four hundred members, and hopes yet to complete this work and present it to the citizens of Mansfield, through their public library, as a memorial of the brave men who went to the front from that vicinity. He is an honored past commander of the post and has been a delegate to the national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic and a member of the council of administration, department of Ohio. He is a Freemason also, affiliating with the lodge at Loudonville. Politically he is a strong Democrat. He has made an exhaustive study of monetary questions and has written somewhat extensively in exposition of his views.

In 1860 Mr. Parker married Miss Cristie N. Gibbons, a daughter of Tobias and Ursula (Newkirk) Gibbons, of Wayne county, Ohio. Mr. Gibbons is a farmer and justice of the peace, a citizen held in high respect, whose judgment carries weight in the community.—a positive man of Welsh descent who is utterly fearless in expressing and living up to his convictions. The following items concerning the children of Silas Chauncey and Cristie N. (Gibbons) Parker will be found interesting in this connection: Sallie L., the first born, is dead. Essie May also is dead. Edith Jane is the stenographer and bookkeeper for Brown's Mills, Mansfield, and is one of the trustees of that concern. Amasa Cephas Parker is the local manager for the Prudential Life Insurance Company, Cincinnati. Frank Alonzo Parker, formerly assistant editor of the Pittsburg Dispatch, is located at New Orleans, in charge of the southern bureau of the Scripps-McRae League. His prose and poetry have found place in the best periodicals. Libbie Colter Parker is a member of her father's household. Kary Gibbon Parker is a student at a leading medical college at Cincinnati.

It seems pertinent to add something concerning Mr. Parker's brothers and sisters. Alonzo Priest Parker is a farmer of Stark, Kansas. Calvin Parker, also a farmer, lives at Ashland, Ohio. William Priest Parker is a merchant at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Laura is dead. Other sisters are Mrs. George Smith, deceased; Mrs. Harrison Fisher, of Union City, Pennsylvania; and Mrs. Wilson Morris, of Loudonville, Ohio, who is an artist of ability. James Loudon Parker is a resident of southern California, and Rev. Isaac Dillon Parker, of Chicago, is a lecturer on Bible studies in several colleges. Mr. Parker's aunt, Edith Parker, attended school in New York and was so well educated that, though she was only ten years old when the family came to Ohio, she immediately after their arrival became the first teacher in Newkirk settlement.

In 1897 Mr. Parker wrote and published an excellent work, entitled *A Treatise on Such Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America as Relates to Thefts and Counterfeiting of Postage Stamps, Stamped Envelopes and Postal Cards, and to Other Wrongs Against the Postal Service, with Suggestions as to How These Wrongs may be Reduced to the Minimum.*

Mention has been made of a poem written by Mr. Parker, descriptive of events, some of which were peculiar even in those pioneer days and all of which were important in connection with his family history. The author has named these verses "Chain Links, or Links of Gold," and has introduced them as follows: "These lines were suggested by links now in possession of the writer, taken from an old ox chain used by James Loudon

Priest, founder of Loudonville, Ohio, in moving to this part of Ohio in 1808, when he settled on the farm on the Lake fork of the Mohican, now owned by the Schauweker heirs, the same being located in Holmes county, Ohio, on the line of the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad, three and a half miles east of Loudonville."

CHAIN LINKS, OR LINKS OF GOLD.

These chain links, one hundred years old,
Though of iron, are links of gold;
They are rich in family lore,
Recalling deeds of days of yore.

Links taken from an old ox chain
That over hill, through wood, o'er plain,
Drew precious freight of living weight
To Lake Fork hills at slow ox-gait.

The oxen were named Buck and Bright:
They trudged by day and grazed by night,
Always faithful and always strong,
Trundling covered wagon along.

The wagon, containing seed-corn and plow,
Followed by the faithful family cow,
With pigs and sheep and calf and colt as well,
Was filled with things too numerous to tell.

Then, from beneath the wagon's white cover,
Peeped forth children, sister and brother;
And there was also our dear grandmother,
Snugly tucked beneath warm bed cover.

For, as I've been told and am proud to say,
A daughter—my mother—was born on the way.
Though this to the load added just one more,
The oxen trudged on the same as before.—
Taking no part in the mirth of the day
Caused by the baby born on the way.

Then there came on foot six sons, strong and brave,
Father, with grandfather, from over the wave,
And daughters aback, sixteen in all,
Moving west to carve with ax and maul
From Mohican's hills homes for one and all.

Of the sixteen that came by slow ox-train,
Not one is living now: none now remain.
Link by link each family chain is broken:
Death, with golden links, binds earth and heaven.

This is why I say these links so old
That, though of iron, they are links of gold.

SILAS CHAUNCEY PARKER.