

Biographies of West Virginia statehood leaders were prepared by Marshall University Humanities Program graduate students enrolled in Dr. Billy Joe Peyton's Fall 2010 "Historical Studies" class at Marshall's South Charleston campus.

By Kelly L. Pruett

### **Granville Parker**

Granville Parker (January 18, 1809-May 10, 1881), delegate from Cabell County, was born in Clamsford, Massachusetts, and educated in the schools of Massachusetts. An active mind and a good cultural background made possible his admission to the bar with only a reading knowledge of law. He practiced his profession first at Lowell and later at Worcester, Massachusetts. While Eli Thayer was trying to establish a settlement at Ceredo, Wayne County, (West) Virginia, Parker came to Guyandotte in present Cabell County to represent the Guyandotte Land Association. In 1861 he helped to organize the Cabell County Petroleum Company. In 1840 he married Eliza, daughter of Philip True of Portland, Maine, who bore him two daughters, both gifted writers.

When the war began Parker was sojourning in Cabell County. He had openly opposed secession and expressed sympathy with efforts then being made at Wheeling to reorganize the government of Virginia on a loyal basis. For these activities General Jenkins ordered his arrest. He escaped and soon thereafter joined the new state constitution makers at Wheeling. More than anything else his presentation of the probable effects of the inclusion of Alleghany County upon the indebtedness of the proposed state resulted in the decision not to include that and neighboring counties. As a newspaper correspondent, Parker did more than any other one person to keep the new state movement before the country at large. In 1875, his collected articles on the Wes

Virginia statehood movement and kindred subjects were published at Wellsburg, West Virginia, in a book entitled, *The Formation of West Virginia and Other Incidents in the Civil War*. He died at Wellsburg, West Virginia in 1881, and is buried there.

Sources:

Atkinson and Gibbens, *Prominent Men*, pp. 816-818; Wellsburg Herald, May 11, 1881.

Ambler, Charles H., Francis Haney Atwood and William B. Mathews, editors, *Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia (1861-1863)*, p. 82; Huntington: Gentry Brothers Printers.