

**NJS Presents****Museums, Archives, Artifacts, and Documents News****In this Issue:*****Voices from the Past Emerge at Parker Homestead- 1665*****By Elizabeth Hanson****DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/njs.v3i2.89>**

*The Parker Homestead – 1665 is a unique remnant of the past located in Little Silver, NJ. It is listed on both the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, and managed by an all-volunteer, non-profit corporation, [Parker Homestead-1665, Inc.](#) In this piece, Trustee Elizabeth Hanson introduces the site to NJ Studies readers and shares a recently transcribed 19<sup>th</sup> century letter from the archive.*

Three Quaker siblings from Newport, Rhode Island resettled in NJ in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Two of these Parker brothers claimed much of the land which is currently Little Silver in Monmouth County. Peter Parker began developing his acreage into what we now call the Parker Homestead. A unique aspect of the Homestead property today is that it remained in the hands of succeeding generations of Parkers from 1665 until the last surviving descendant residing at the site passed away in 1995. That means 330 years of Parkers on the same farm!

As each generation took possession of the original one room dwelling, they added rooms and amenities. Out buildings were added and updated through the years as well. The land was actively farmed into the 1970s, with family members often serving as community leaders. When the last Parker to reside in the home, Julia, passed away in 1995 with no children, she left not only the home, farm buildings, and 10 acres of property to the Borough of Little Silver for use as a cultural and educational venue for the town- she also left the contents of all these structures!

Twenty years later, volunteers continue to go through papers, photographs, furnishings, farm equipment, and other materials to discover more about the Parkers and life in NJ from the colonial era to the present.

### **John Henry Smith**

In Generation 7, Michael Henry Parker married Susan Ella Smith (these were Julia's parents). This brought Smith family documents into the Parker Homestead. In 2012, a journal from 1859 kept by a John Henry Smith (b. 1836) was discovered in one of the many boxes of papers. Evidently John Henry, a carpenter by trade and a poet by hobby, led a rather wild life as a young man and left Eatontown with a friend to work on a plantation in Georgia. An excerpt from his journal reads:

It is mostly to absent myself from such scenes, that I am constrained to leave my home, with its associations, and seek in a southern clime, a retreat free from the continuing evils which surround my pleasant Jersey home, evils in which I have too freely and often too willingly participated. In a sparsely populated country with friends of moral integrity, I trust the remembrance of fresh scenes of dissipation may become effaced and the habits and practices engendered in my northern home, may become extinct, and that in the future they may be remembered only with regret. Our preparations are completed and now we bid adieu to home and friends, and set sail for a southern land.

In 2016, a bundle of handwritten papers neatly tied up with a very thin string was found in a binder of Parker recipes. Upon investigation, it became clear that these small pieces of thin paper, handwritten on both sides in very fine, small hand, were letters written in December of 1859 by John Henry in Georgia to his family at home in Eatontown. Some of the events described in the letters mirrored events discussed in the journal, but the letters give more insight into the day to day happenings on the plantation. John Henry and his friend had a respected status on the plantation. They lived in their own cabin, separate from the slave cabins, and took meals with the family in the plantation house. The letters contain John Henry's view on individual slaves, on slavery in

general, on women's role in society, and on happenings of the day. The language may occasionally be jarring for 21<sup>st</sup> century readers. It is not yet known exactly when John Henry returned from Georgia, but it is known that he later enlisted in the Union Army, serving under General Robert McAllister and rising quickly through the ranks. He survived the war.

Parker Homestead – 1665, Inc. appreciates the opportunity to share a transcript of one of those letters here for readers of *NJ Studies*.

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Monmouth Lodge, Six Oaks, 8 o'clock Dec 16th 1859---Dear Friends... I have sat down to write you another book, I say book for the name letter is hardly applicable for such messes as I send, though at the same time it is to be hoped that no book may contain such a motley jumble as this doubtful will. It is Friday Evening, & stormy, the rain falling upon the roof of the old lodge forcibly reminds me of the little old chancelor at Brushville where I have lain on many a stormy night and listened to the pattering on the shingles & thinking of all kinds of strange incredible things which no one else ever thought of & musing over dreams of family (sic) long after all was silent & all of you hushed in repose. It was about 9 o'clock on Wednesday Evening. Gus and Pat were sitting on one side of the old fireplace, and I on the other – Pat smoking – Gus reading, & I writing. The fire was burning cheerfully & throwed a glowing light around the room lighting up the pictures on the wall & the old ceiling overhead & everything \_\_\_ here was silent save for the crackling of the old pine logs on the hearth. Suddenly a footstep was heard on the verandah followed by a low knock on the door. We all looked up for an instant, but supposing it was some of the niggers, each one again busied himself as before, I merely saying "Come in". – When lo! the door opened, and with a low laugh in walked Smith Cutter Pitcher Esq! We sprang from our seats, books & pens dropped from our fingers, and upsetting the table and chairs in our hurry we grasped him by the

hands & almost wrung his arm off with the shaking. Most gladly did we welcome a Jerseryman to the old Lodge and then followed an endless number of questions & answers & eager inquiries after friends & relatives and all general news from Jersey. He brought us good news in general, and had had a quick and agreeable passage. Arriving at Heredon early in the evening, his impatience to get here would admit of no delay, so he hired an old nigger to pilot him here & so walked all the way from the station after dark. We had expected him on the Saturday before & Gus & I in the evening rode down to Heredon on horseback to meet him, but he was not there & we returned much disappointed. The following Monday I received a letter from Cou Morford that stated Smith had been to New York but did not Sail on account of the detention of the steamer adding however that he would start on Saturday. So you see we were expecting him, although at the minute of his entering the Lodge we were neither of us thinking of him. Our surprise was as great as our pleasure, and we sat by the fire until near 12 o'clock talking over things that has transpired since our leaving home. Everything interested us no matter how trifling, or what about. At last, however, we locked up and went to bed as Mr Jones had had another bed fitted up in our sleeping apartment in anticipation of his arrival. But I could not sleep & laid there a long while thinking over what Smith had told us. Yesterday his trunk was brought from the station and as he unpacked it he handed me a bundle saying –“Here is something from your sister. I opened it eagerly snugly hid in the paper was looking just as your round cakes used to look sitting on the shelf down cellar. I looked at it and tried to find prints of your fingers somewhere about it, read the note, then carefully locked it up and went to work. Last night after we had sat by the fire until pretty late, I felt hungry and opened my chest & took it out and cut a piece for each of us. It was not dry as you expected, but nice and moist & Smith & Gus were pleased and pronounced it excellent, particularly Gus who seemed to relish it highly. And it was good – better than good- first rate and rendered a thousand

times better from its having come from home. Why need you to have followed the foolish fashion of all housekeepers- I mean why did you apologize! and to me! Why if it had been of lead I should have \_\_\_\_\_ it just as highly and I intend or rather anticipate much pleasure in eating the rest of it.

San\_\_\_\_\_ mother also sent me some doughnuts, Mrs West sent some apples, and several sent me something, but your cake gave double the pleasure of all the rest though they are all to be thanked for their kindness. I will not thank you for I consider mere thanks as a poor method of conveying a heartfelt gratification such as I experienced when I received your treasured present. There are feelings too deep for thanks & believe me mine were such. --Smith has been to work repairing a lot of cisterns and he already begins to talk of settling down here for life and likes it first rate. He also brought your letter which was a welcome messenger indeed. Your letters, 3 in number, have all been received and I believe I am one ahead of you yet. Sunday 18th We have just finished washing and dressing and I again sit down to write. Smith is in a good spirit and delighted with his situation & the country.

He seems to be quite a Southerner already and talks a great deal about settling down here if everything works right in the future. Well, we all may! who knows but this may be the spot originally designed for our start & success in after life. I have spent many years in Jersey without any particular \_\_\_\_\_ or regret but in that I learned more of human nature than ever anyone has seen me show or heard me speak of & oftentimes when minglings among those scenes you was always crying against I was gaining practical knowledge of human nature and at this time I ask no odds of any older person in reading the human heart, though I make my observations in silence and do not bawl out to the world everything I think. Here especially I find this sort of knowledge to be extremely useful. You have often heard me say how I dislike the carpenter's trade. Many is the

time I have cursed the fate that made me learn it and eventually cried over my obscure lot. But I did not learn of my own choice, had I have had my own way I should not have sought my subsistence by labor, for I believe that I was made for something else more ennobling than to toil day by day in presence of those whose tastes and inclinations were vulgar, & whose minds were taken up with nothing but mere drudgery. During the whole time that I worked at the trade, I was careless and indifferent, the dreams of fancy which I had dwelt over in boyhood were vanished, & there I was drudging along from one day to another without appreciation from those circles which I was born to adorn and without sympathy from my friends. But I seldom grumbled aloud, but when at last I was free of apprenticeship & found every avenue closed for other pursuits, I became careless of myself and consequences, no path seemed marked out for me but one of ceaseless toil with merit unappreciated, & I cared no more for the esteem of the public than I did for my own welfare. You may say that to those who seek it there is ever a road open to knowledge and wealth no matter how humble their occupation or obscure their situation in life. But I tell you I know better. –It isn't so! That is I mean in Jersey, or your part of Jersey –“Who is that!”—Why it's so and so the mechanic!” “O! is that all!” –and away would go the questioner as though he heard enough. “Well, you say, any one of sense ought to know better than to pay attention to such proud individual and to treat with contempt the miserable fool who thinks himself better than a mechanic. But I tell you again what you well know, that round your country, appearance and name and station is everything, & you may as well try to fly as to seek companions life among your betters, or to rise from the station in which fate has placed you. But here, thanks to the good sense of the southerners, it is not so! – Here a mechanic or working man is not looked upon with ignorant contempt but is considered a gentlemen among gentlemen, is treated with politeness and hospitality in every instance and is ever made conscious of his worth and importance by the

sociable and agreeable manners of those who really are true gentlemen. Mind and intellect with integrity are here made the basis from which one is judged and I may gladly say that here –I have for the first time not felt sorry at learning the carpenters trade. Prospects are cheering and everything else presents a smiling future. – Well, that is all got along with - & now I'll talk of something else. I will describe the appearance of the Lodge at this moment. A log fire is burning on the hearth and Gus is sitting before it drawing a picture. On the mantel piece are piled in great confusion, newspapers, an old novel, Pat's prayer book, a bottle of ink, 2 gourd shells, a sandbox, a greasy candlestick, an old picture, a song book, razor strops, a soap box, nails, leather strings, two big papers of tobacco and four pipes. In one corner lies the broom and a pile of old boots and in another a great heap of fat Georgia pine. The walls of the room are filled with pictures which I have drawn, and at one end hangs a big stalk of tobacco fresh from the fields. Pat has gone away, but his dinner had been brought in & it stands ready for him at a table on one side of the room. Smith & I are writing at another table in the center and upon the table are several letters some finished and others half done. He is finishing one to Lewis in which I have also written and as we are all busily engaged we are each smoking our pipe and such a cloud of tobacco smoke as pours out of the door you never seen. Outside, everything is cheerful and pleasant, yesterday it rained a little but today the bright warm sun is streaming down and lighting up the beautiful landscape with its gorgeous rays. Over in the nigger quarters everything is silent save the happy and boisterous shout of some negro now and then and Christmas being so close at hand the niggers are very happy in anticipation of 3 or 4 holidays & at night we hear them singing & dancing & beating old tin pans and making all kinds of noises in all directions—Sunday Evening – We have been out walking this afternoon going to the residence of Dr Jones a younger brother of our employers. Talk about your pretty places I wish you could see that. It is situated at the junction of four roads, and each

one of these roads is overhung with rows of beautiful trees a mile each way from the house making long shady avenues canopied with the bright green foliage. On each side of the immense fields stretch far away to the distant forest & as you go up the long noble avenues and approach nearer the house the eye is greeted with great rows of Banana trees –

\_\_\_\_\_ and cst for plans – and a \_\_\_\_\_ I have drawn the plans and designs for his villa which suit him the best. By George I ain't got a lot of biles on my legs, its no use talking. Smith has six niggers to tend him and they hardly keep him going so you may judge how fast the niggers move around. I heard the niggers dancing out by the blacksmith shop so if you'll just wait a minute I'll go out and take a look at them. – Well there- I've laughed so much I can hardly hold a pen. Such nigger actions, such tearing and slashing, hollering and singing, patting and dancing you never seen. "Now den Autony jis step back dar. dis yar child is gwine to show you something you nebber seen." There is one after another nigger "Dar dar Gilbert old childs dats enough, leab the floor and rest your bones while did nigger gibbs you de real old breakdown style. Beat on dar Eli I golly now I's a gwine to tear myself all to chunks!" Christmas being so close at hand makes them unusually jolly. Well it is nine o'clock and that is the hour of bedtime in Monmouth Lodge – so good night and pleasant dreams—Friday night 23rd - I can sometimes hardly realize that I am a thousand miles from home and Smith and Gus say it is the same with them. Well being old friends and acquaintances and all from one place makes it seem like home somewhat and then the novelety of everything around us has greatly worn off and we feel and act as though we have been here a long time., I tell you what it is, we do enjoy ourselves, and that too in a beneficial way. Such piles of books and papers – why my old desk up in the kitchen chamber wasn't a beginning. Every shelf and table and chair is piled, and sometimes the floor. Sundays – I have them sprawled all over the beds and such a lot as I have written since being here would astonish you. Several quires



of paper. Cou Morford in his letter wants me to write a series of southern stories for some Monmouth paper. Well I don't know maybe I will so you can look out after a while for some of Ike Idlemans Georgian yarns. Well there! I wish you could see them sweet potatoes laying there on the fire. They look more like great big pigs a roasting than anything else. I expect we will have to cut that one in two with an axe. This is a foolish habit we've got into – I mean roasting and eating so many sweet potatoes every night. And that too after eating such glorious suppers. I expect that it is these potatoes that make us dream so much. Pat dreams all kinds of stuff and sometimes we hear him in his room, out on the floor stamping and tearing around fast asleep. Gus has the funniest dreams and sometimes when he tells them to me we both get laughing till we can't stand up. I tell him that is all owing to the potatoes and he says and then he goes on to explain in a comical medical style- all about it. So for his display of medical knowledge I call him Doctor – Smith we call Governor Barlow, Pat we call the corporal, and myself they style the Professor. Doctor Bungy, Governor Barlow, corporal Welsh and the Professor – Great crowd – ain't it. O! did you ever eat any kids meat – you didn't- well then you don't know what's good. They kill one pretty near everyday, also two or three hogs. In a week or two they will begin to kill hogs for fair and then I guess there will be great work – only think two or three thousand hogs. wouldn't they make a lot of sausages!. We have sausage now in cakes, melts in your mouth. I had fig cake tonight for supper by chowder if that wasn't good! Well, I'll stop for awhile now and take a smoke. Smith and Gus and Pat are all at it and are making such an awful fog that I can't stand it any longer so you'll just have to hold on a minute till I light my pipe. –Now look a here! What's going on up around home. What kind of talk are you having? I never knew a “breff” about Maggie Smith and Mr All-over'. Well I can't help it-let em go. Mr. Jones has got the prettiest tame deer you ever seen. Gramma, you ought to see it with its beautiful little silver bell. Would you like to have one?

Of course you'll say "yes" – but deers are not plentiful as they were a few years ago though there are a great many here yet. Smith has just laid the big sweet potatoes on the table and said "There Professor help yourself" Well I guess I will. So good night again! I guess I'll get this letter done by Christmas night – think I won't. Yes! I tank so much rudder as Dr Gus says. Saturday night Christmas Eve - I suppose you are sitting around in happy anticipation of Christmas. Janey I suppose is hanging up her stockings and going to bed early. Well I guess old Santa Claus will be along. I seen him today and told him to stop at Brushville. We had baked rabbit and broiled quail for supper and for dinner we had trout, and the way they are getting good things ready for tomorrow is a caution. Now see here. I heard a great yarn today. It was told to me by Smith – who got it from his mother and she got it from Brushville. Smith said that you had heard that here in the south liquor of all kinds stood about anywheres and everywheres, free and open to all. – Well I ain't a bit surprised that such a story would go around up in Jersey, it is a fair sample of the lying, mischief making, gossiping, propensity of the infernal tattling gad about women who abound in that in that locality. Let me tell those poor, envious, jealous fools that there is more rum drank in their own township in one month than there is in some parts of the south in 25 years. Liquor indeed. I should like Mr Jones to hear tell of a drop of liquor being on his plantation. He is strictly temperate as well as a religious man. I don't know as I should have mentioned this, but there are plenty of folks there in Jersey who are jealous of us boys for our good luck, and so they start and circulate all such yarns to our detriment. And I expect that you believe them and talk and Lord knows what all about it. Well, I don't care. I have given you a plain and simple statement of the fact & you can credit it or not just as you like but I don't want to hear any more such contemptible stuff in any of your letters, for I despise all such yarns as much as I do their authors. As far as I can hear, Asbury Gaber and his wife & few more started it. Asbury is jealous because Smith is down here, and like all

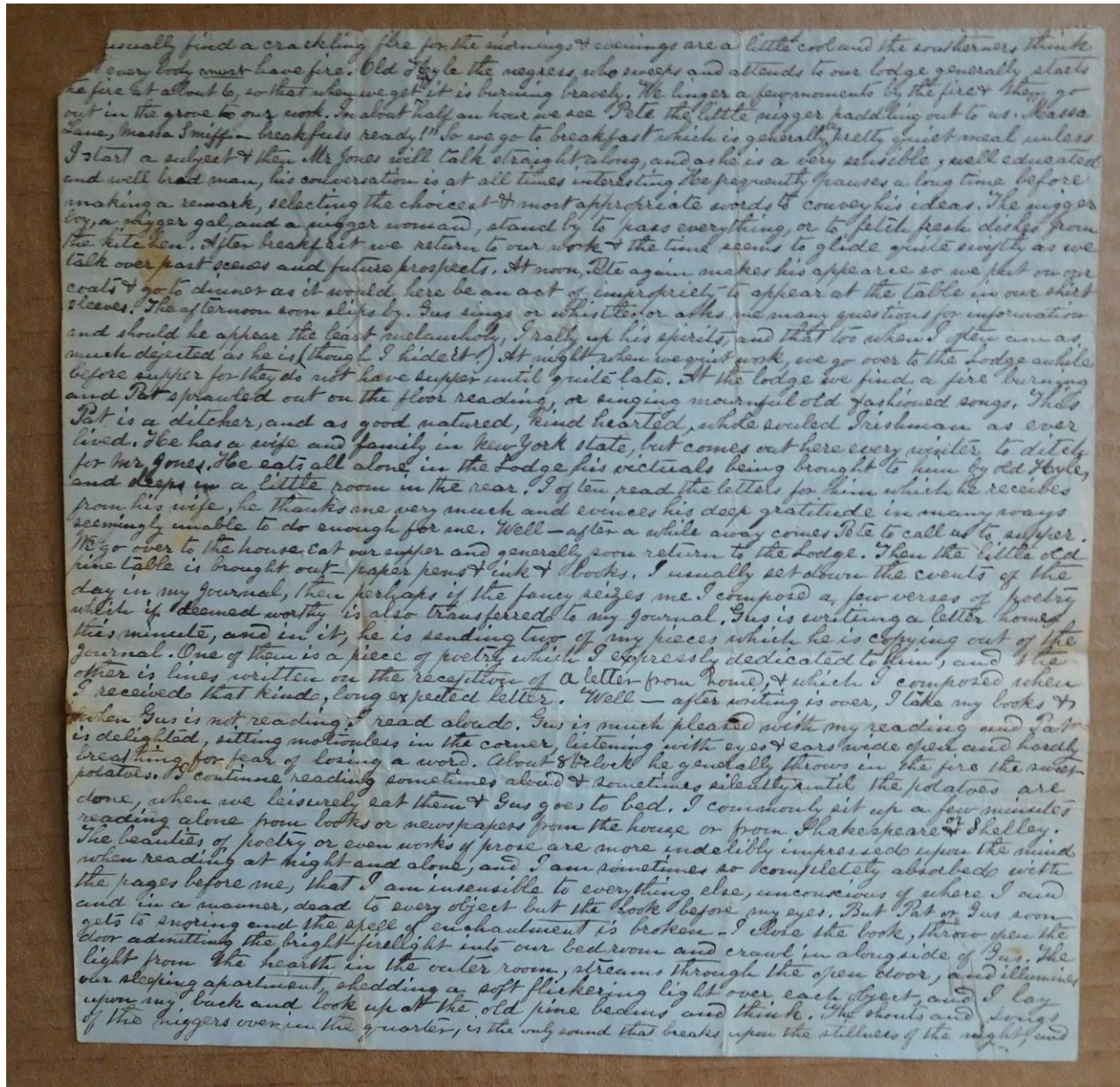
narrow minded, selfish envious beings takes that method of venting his spite – Christmas Day –A Merry Christmas to you all. The weather is very pleasant and mild and somehow or other it don't seem much like Christmas. In Jersey I suppose you are having great times. Roast turkey and so on. Well, the niggers have been running down the biggest Gobblers out of the flock of four or five hundred so I expect we will have turkey too. Hurt shot a wild one yesterday & I suppose he will also grace the table. Wild turkeys are almost twice as big as tame ones and they consider them much better eating and I think so too. We have been all morning washing and dressing and sewing on buttons Etc and now we have all sat down to write. If you have got any spectacles about the house I think you had better use them in reading this letter for I can hardly read it myself. After this next summer, perhaps we will stay down here in some of the cities during the summer. Of course we don't know yet what will turn up. In about a month the alligators will begin to leave the mud and come out of the ponds. The large lake near us is full of them but in the winter they are well buried in the mud. Emma, I want you to take good care of all my books and papers and Henry please don't do anything with the stuff which I had started for a tool chest as I shall want to finish it when I come home. Mrs Jones has got a new sewing machine, a different one from any I ever saw. Yesterday – they sent out for me to come in the house. So I went in and there she and Mr Jones were a tinkering and clinking around this sewing machine, not knowing how to put it in running order. Well, I commenced at it and after a while rigged it up all right and sat down a sewed a piece of tow cloth- first rate- They were much pleased as they had been fooling around with it a long time and couldn't do anything with it. Tomorrow the niggers will all get a new suit of clothes, and as they are to have 2 or 3 holidays I expect there will be noise enough around here. Tomorrow or next day Gus and I will go to Augusta to get some locks and bolts and some more tools etc etc. It is represented as a very beautiful city—and we expect to ascribe much pleasure as well as benefit

from our holiday trip. How do they come on up around the corner? Amanda Ineddiken has moved back again sh. Is Joe Thomas around there yet? is Joe Tallman as red in the face as ever! Who is to work for you Henry? How does Wash Brown get along with Mike VanDyke's house. Richard Poole keeps school sh—How about that nigger that licked that young one so over in Middletown. How does the railroad come on. How are they getting with Lairds building – and and and --- how does everybody do and how does everything get along. I suppose there is great excitement in the North about the hanging of old Brown and his gang in Virginia. Don't hear a great deal of it here. Once in awhile we read of the arrest of someone suspected of belonging to his party. I tell you what, there is no chance for a abolitionist down here. The minute a person begins to speak against slavery they better be leaving. Well I have to get to be a firm believer in slavery because I see how much better the niggers are off, and it only a parcel of northern poors as the \_\_\_\_\_ who know nothing about the south, that is always raising this muss about slavery. Come down here & see for yourself awhile and you would never again talk against slavery. Every nigger in the north ought to be a slave and I know it – Well Pat is singing, Smith & I are writing and Gus is reading Shakespeare. Last night Mrs. Jones made us a present of a basket of apples and we are having a good time eating apples and oranges, peanuts & walnuts – and smoking our pipes. We have all got greatly attached to the Lodge and indeed it is not surprising for care never enters it, pride is a stranger, and restraint is unknown to us so I guess we sometimes make Smith a little sorry that he should be cumbered by a wife and family at home. But now he is as good an old bachelor as any of us, -- Well we have been to dinner and a good one it was. I believe I have ate too much macaroni. Pat has got company, two Irish ditch diggers from a neighboring plantation. You can tell Mary that Pat is married but I believe I told you that in another letter. The niggers are still engaged in sowing wheat and husking corn and have been at it a long while. The corn is pulled off husk and all, then

they cart it home and husk it nights. The husks are fed to the cattle, but they never eat any stalks. The wheat is all cracked before it is sowed and it comes up very quick. There are several kinds of wheat here, all of them superior I think to Jersey wheat! There is talks of building a stream mill down to the station for different purposes such as scroll and bracket sawing which will be better for us. I suppose you have one or two sleigh rides before this comes. The old Blue jay Mr Jones tells us that the weather we are now having is as cold as it ever is here and it is now not at all disagreeable. We going over to the cottonhouse by and by to weigh ourselves. Smith says he knows he has gained 10 lbs already and Gus and I are pretty heavy I tell you, but when February comes around and the hot weather begins to set in it will soon take the fat off again. Smith says he has ate too much dinner and has gone in the other room to lay down. Bill Bennett sent me a paper the other day, the first one I have received from home in some time. Smith says that a revival has been started before he came away. There is great work again. I expect that some of them will almost live at the church in order to get a seat at night. Well it may do good, but I am extremely doubtful. For instance look at some of the last winters young converts. But never mind about that. Emma, if you go to school this winter, try more than ever before, make it your sole and only object to attain knowledge. You will never regret having done so and years after this the remembrance of your school days will be a source of much pleasure, and the many things you learned upon the most trifling objects of nature, if we have read of them and gained some information of them from books. How much more can we enjoy ourselves if we are slightly conversant with the history and peculiarities of things by which we are surrounded. Janey: I want to see how much you will know when I get home. I would like for you all to see the city of Savannah, It would suit you Catherine. The streets are about 150 feet wide and filled with beautiful trees having a row down each side and one down the centre. About four miles from Savannah in a southern direction a beautiful

cemetery, and Mr Jones says it is far ahead of Greenwoods. He has been all over the north and so has Mrs Jones and in fact I believe over most of the United States. They put up at the St. Nicholas when in New York. I don't know but maybe they will get to Long Branch some of these summers. Mr Jones however \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ now adays helping his overseer to take charge of the niggers, but Mrs Jones is going away with the family as soon as warm weather sets in. Monday has just come in with a pair of new boots on and he,s awful proud of them. Well I getting toward the bottom of my last page, and if it takes you as long to read it as it does me to write that will be quite a job and Henry won't be able to wait to hear it this time, particularly if it is dinner hour. But if at night you can stop the old machine for a couple of hours, put some more wood in the Stove and then go at it. I expect your finger is a great bother to you Catherine – well when it hurts you too much just let Emma take hold and you tell her what to write reserving a corner for herself. But little douse you must write close, crowd in as much as you can and so must you both. I do dislike a short letter. I shall take a walk by and by and shall put in my pocket the last piece of your cake, which I esteem more than any other Christmas remembrance. Hallo! Monday has sat down the fire and looked at his new boots until he fell asleep. It does seem pretty long until the first of June, but the time slips by pretty fast and as we are contented with our lonesome situation it is not such a sacrifice as it would appear if we were homesick. Homesick! Pshaw! That's a word for women to use --- There considerable of the yankee about all of us, we are continually looking for something new and finding objects to excite our curiosity. I wonder if could persuade any young carpenters to leave Long Branch and come here with us next fall. O – Mrs Jones says she is going to introduce to a young lady over in Emanuel County who is the belle of the county and immensely rich. Well there I didn't mean to write such stuff as that. how after you receive this letter and go right straight to work and answer it. Don't put it off but commence

immediately. And now let me caution you again. Don't show this letter to anybody but keep it within yourselves for it is intended for you at Brushville and you only. Write me what you think of us down here and what folks say about us, send me all the news and general information. Anything, however trifling, to you will be interesting to me. And now in conclusion – Janey, be a



A sample of Smith's handwriting as seen in one of the letters.

good girl and mind your book. Emma improve each moment, time once gone never returns. Henry I hope you may succeed to your utmost satisfaction in your buildings & other undertaking & Catherine may your path be ever peaceful, prosperous and happy and with you all my good wishes ever rest. Yours truly, J H Smith

*Liz Hanson lives in and loves her own pre-Civil War home in Little Silver and has long enjoyed scouring antique shops throughout the northeast to furnish it. However, that other large white house up on the knoll, passed many times a day while doing chores around town, had looked interesting to her for a long time. The lady on the full sized tractor mowing the lawn added to the intrigue during the 1980s. When that lady, Julia Parker, passed in 1995 there was publicity about that large white house becoming town property. This piqued Liz's interest. The Borough maintained the house and there were frequently workmen doing projects, but the house did not ever open to the public. In 2012, the borough formed a committee to assist it in the restoration and Liz was one of the first to enlist. She had seen the inside of the house for the first time in 2011: fallen plaster, peeling wallpaper, and the world's largest cobwebs. Clearly this would be a fun project! She worked with the committee on writing by-laws and other paperwork tasks associated with forming a non-profit. When the corporation was formed she continued as a volunteer and was assigned the task of cataloging the hundreds of boxes of "stuff." There are a lot fewer boxes to explore now, but she continues the work as untrained archivist on the material. She was appointed to the board of trustees in 2015 and currently serves as secretary, but opening those boxes and handling the old things is still her favorite job!*