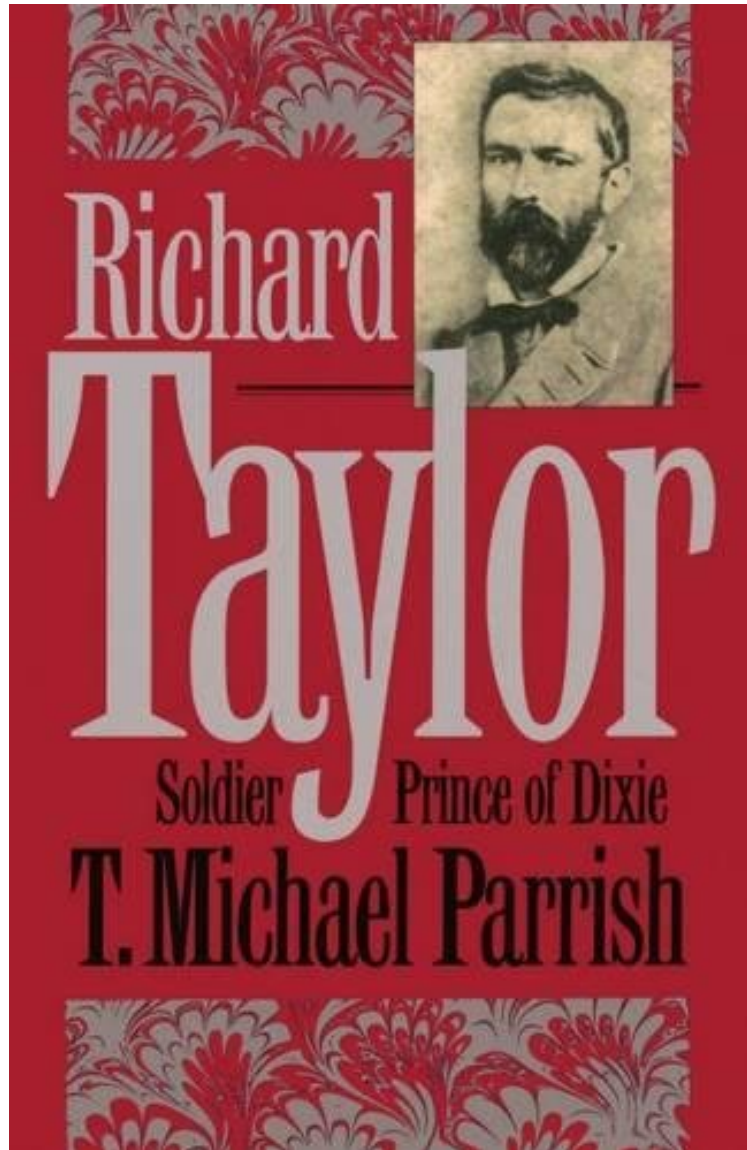


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Richard Taylor: Soldier Prince of Dixie (Civil War America)

T. Michael Parrish

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T. Michael Parrish : Richard Taylor: Soldier Prince of Dixie (Civil War America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Richard Taylor: Soldier Prince of Dixie (Civil War America):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Read as a prelude to Destruction and Reconstruction By William S. Grass Before reading the personal memoir of an historical figure, I always make an effort to first read a scholarly biography of that person if one is available. Since Richard Taylor's memoir "Destruction and Reconstruction" is often

highly ranked among the suggested reading lists for the Civil War, I planned to read it, so I set out to first find a bio. That's when I found Parrish's "Soldier Prince of Dixie." Through Parrish's depiction of Taylor's life we are given a front row seat first into the making of an aristocratic, Yale educated, slave-holding planter, and a son of a president no less. By following Taylor we see in microcosm the story of the late antebellum South and its destruction. He became a planter by inheritance when his father died. He went from being an elitist Whig to being swept into the torrent by fire-eating democrats. With no prior military training he became an outstanding field commander for the C.S.A.; among talented amateurs he was surpassed only by Forrest and perhaps Cleburne. Early on he served in the east in the Valley with Stonewall. Later he returned to the Trans-Mississippi and eventually reached the pinnacle of his achievements by stopping Banks in the Red River campaign. As a result of the war his plantation was destroyed, and he endured the death of his young son. Still, he retained some national influence. He advised President Johnson on cabinet appointments and was a personal acquaintance of Henry Adams, author of "The Education of Henry Adams." For anyone planning on reading "Destruction and Reconstruction," Parrish's work is valuable for its maps, especially the ones that show the Trans-Mississippi areas like the Red River Valley and the Lafourche and Teche bayou regions.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excelelnt! By hoseboy This is my ancestor, so I have a little more than a passing interest.. One of Taylor's daughters married my great, great grandfather (I don't know if I have enough or one too few greats in there).. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. PARRISH IS A MASTER STORY-TELLER By alan shaw Excellent Read. Parrish is a master story-teller. I couldn't put it down. Must reading for Civil War aficionados

Using widely scattered and previously unknown primary sources, Parrish's biography of Confederate general Richard Taylor presents him as one of the Civil War's most brilliant generals, eliciting strong performances from his troops in the face of manifold obstacles in three theaters of action.

From Publishers Weekly This definitive biography by the author of Confederate Imprints: A Bibliography presents Taylor, familiar to historians as one of the Confederacy's better generals, in a broader context. A wealthy plantation owner, son of President Zachary Taylor, he saw himself as a principled aristocrat and conservative critic of democracy (whether northern or southern), failing to realize that his position was sustained by his involvement in the democratic struggle for power and capitalist competition for wealth. Only Taylor's service to the Confederacy, during which he proved himself as both a combat leader and an administrator, reflected his ideal of public duty. His postwar assertion of southern rights within the Democratic party confirmed his status as the titular "soldier prince of Dixie"--a characterization well suited to a life lived on the boundary between myth and reality. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal Confederate General Taylor was the son of one president (Zachary Taylor) and the brother-in-law of another (Confederate Jefferson Davis). In addition to his military career, he was active politically and was a gifted writer. Taylor's most important command was his repulse of the Union's Red River campaign. This book examines all the facets of Taylor's life but is, at heart, a military biography. Because Parrish presents a surprisingly favorable view of Taylor's military ability, a section comparing his opinions with those of other generals would have been very useful. Nevertheless, academic libraries may want to consider this solid though unanalytical biography.- Fritz Buckallew, Univ. of Central Oklahoma Lib., Edmond Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Kirkus s From rare-book dealer Parrish, an engaging and exhaustively researched biography of an important and intriguing, though rarely studied, Confederate leader. Had he accomplished nothing in the Civil War, Richard Taylor would still have been historically noteworthy: Gifted problem-son of Zachary Taylor and brother-in-law of Jefferson Davis, he graduated from Yale in 1845 at age 19 and acquired great wealth at his father's death in 1850. As heir to the fabulous plantation of Fashion, Taylor became one of Louisiana's most prominent planters and slaveholders (and, thanks to his consequent involvement in local politics, one of the state's leading political figures). Parrish depicts Taylor as highly intelligent, cultivated, and enlightened, sensitive to the moral dilemmas of slavery and humane and paternalistic toward his many slaves. According to the author, Taylor decried slavery as a moral evil--but not evil enough, apparently, for him to manumit his own slaves. Taylor disapproved of the radical rhetoric of the secessionist "fire-eaters," but, like many Southern planters, he was radicalized by John Brown's abortive raid on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry. Though his father was a Whig President, and he himself nurtured pro-Union sentiments, Taylor gradually allowed himself to be drawn (albeit, Parrish indicates, with great reluctance) into the secessionist fringe of the Democratic Party at the fractious 1860 Charleston convention. After Louisiana's secession (which he voted in favor of), Taylor entered Confederate service as a colonel of the Louisiana Brigade and achieved distinction as a commander under Stonewall Jackson in the legendary Valley campaign in 1862. Transferred to Louisiana to repel the Federal offensive there, he succeeded in 1864 in stopping General Banks's Red River Campaign. After the war, Taylor became a leading advocate of states' rights and finished *Destruction and Reconstruction*, one of the most distinguished Civil War memoirs, shortly before his death in 1879. A thorough and significant contribution to Civil War scholarship. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.