

“There is a people among us that call themselves Democrats that are gaining ground fast; they now include about one half of the inhabitants ... all that are very loose & irreligious; I fear that they are trying to destroy all regularity in government & especially all religion ...” (Thaddeus Hayes, December 7th, 1801)

Thaddeus Hayes

[Manuscript] *The Journal of Thaddeus Hayes of Connecticut, 1795-1803*

\$4800



A small collection of three journals kept by Thaddeus Hayes of Granby, Connecticut, sometime farmer and bridle maker, distiller and preacher, spanning the years 1795-1803, with an additional final entry from 1805. The journal is comprised of three separate octavo booklets measuring (4" x 6½"), consisting of a total number of 140 manuscript pages.

The first booklet of 32 leaves is re-sewn in the original paper wrapper; a second booklet of 24 leaves is loose, without a wrapper; and the third booklet of 16 leaves is sewn in a near contemporary plain paper wrapper. All three booklets have two or three conjugate leaves (bifolia) that have been either bound out of chronological order, or have entries written out of chronological order by Hayes: the overall chronological sequence of entries from 1795 through 1803 can be easily followed through all three booklets. With an accompanying five-stanza manuscript poem or doggerel likely written by Hayes's son on a separate sheet of paper under the title: "Brief Account of Newgate Prison, in Connecticut." Modest toning, very good overall.

Hayes opens his journal on September 29th, 1795 with a prefatory summary of his life up to that point, and commences with intermittent entries beginning on Sunday October 11th, 1795. Throughout the journal up through 1803 Hayes describes his various employments (making bridles and parts for looms, posting books for the publisher Whitlock and Munsell, etc); his intermittent health concerns; intermittent visits to Newgate prison; his business partnership with one James Higgins; and setting up a still house and retailing distilled spirits.

A scarce, early diary of a New England yeoman farmer. A selection of extracts follows:

Granby, September 29th 1795

"I now being in a weak and poor state of health not being able to labour take this method to spend some part of my leisure hours ... I was born January 23rd 1771 in a place called Bushyhill then part of Simsbury but now Granby ... My Mother died May 9th, 1780 after five years illness | Then I lost a kind and tender parent although I was not sensible of it then ... she did often give me and my brother good advice although we were but young The day that she died she called us to her bed side and gave us such advice as I hope God will help us to remember as long as we live.

My Father married his second wife January 1781 before this time I had seen my happiest days although she was very kind to us for one or two years at first But I had got so big that I could help my Father a considerable and was obliged to work very hard as he was always a very hard labouring man And I being his oldest son was obliged to labour very hard until I was deprived of my health ... My Father's second wife died April 18th 1791 after about one years illness. He married his third wife November 1792 with whom he now lives."

[Hayes recounts his various employments: delivering grain to Hartford, working with a team of men in the winter and plowing in the spring; and intermittent health concerns:]

"I had a very tedious pain in my breast ... the following winter I was not able to do any kind of hard work. But I used to fodder the cattle and so some such very light work ... In June 1793 I went to New Lebanon Spring or pool for my health but did not get any benefit by it ..."

[He recounts traveling to Branford, New York, and comments on the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia:]

"May this year long be remembered that God sent His judgements (called the Philadelphia fever) upon Philadelphia which swept off many thousands of the inhabitants of Philadelphia ..." / ... "The

latter part of the summer (1794) I bought me some tools and went to making Bridles ... and I have made now and then a Bridle ever since and that is all of the work that I have done except waiting upon the Tavern or some such notions unless writing may be called work ...” / “January 1st 1795 I was inoculated for the Small Pox by Dr. Horace Hillyer ... I had it very light had but a very few poxes on me ... I returned home in eighteen days from the time that I was inoculated I had hopes through the Blessing of God that it would have been an advantage to me as to my health But I am not able to say that it was ...”

Sunday October 11th 1795

[During the period from Oct. 11 through April 16, 1796, Hayes works intermittently, travels to Hartford and Simsbury; makes bridles; posts books for the publisher Whitlock and Munsell, etc.:]

April 16 [1796] “I rode to Newgate prison where I have between 20 to 30 prisoners chained to their blocks | Making nails ...”

October 1st [1796] “I rode from Stony Creek through Branford ... I went and see the Cotton and Linning Manufactory in New Haven and it gave me great satisfaction It is the most curious piece of workmanship that ever I beheld.”

November 1st 1796 “I posted books for Mr. Higgins ... / 9th Wednesday I moved to Mr. James Higgins (with my horse and chest of clothes) and shall from this time until I remove from here call it my home. My chief business is to tend his store. May this with the blessing of God be the means of my getting into some business that I may get a comfortable living by it so that I may not be beholden to other people so much as what I have been since I have been deprived of my health.”

January 20th, 1797 “This day I entered into partnership with Mr. James Higgins ...” [he describes the deal, in pounds and shillings ...]

January 20th [1798] “It is now one year since I have been in trade with Mr. Higgins we have sold out about two thousand dollars worth of goods and the most of it is now due to us Money is so scarce that I find it very difficult to collect any.”

[March, 1798: Hayes and Higgins dissolve their partnership:] “I never intend to go into trade again in company with any man living ...”

[October 1798:] “17th I rode to a Freeman’s Meeting ... / ... 26th The Regiment of militia meet at Salmon brook street near Major [Cheney Pettibones?] & I have undertaken to receive the ... (or money paid) for victuals ...”

[1799: Hayes continues to make bridles, rods or other parts for looms and weavers; works at the sawmill; and builds a still house:]

July 8th [1799] “... I rode to Hartford in a wagon purchased a [?]th of rum & brought home with me. / 9th I have put my rum into my still house & am a going to occupy part of it for a store ... I took out license on the 8th instant for retailing ... distilled spirits ...”

25th [October] "I went to Alpheus Hays's to board & began to distill ... / Oct. 30th I was so unwell that I was obliged to leaving off tending my still 31st I hired a man to tend my still"

[On Jan. 1st 1800 he attends the funeral of Captain Elijah Hubbard; on Dec. 25th, 1800 he writes a profession of faith, followed by another profession of faith and hope for better health, both of which he signs; marries Eunice Higley on Feb. 15th, 1801.]

December 7th, 1801 "I rode to a Town Meeting but we were so divided that we could not do business & adjourned: there is a people among us that call themselves Democrats that are gaining ground fast | they now include about one half of the inhabitants | they include all that are very loose & irreligious | I fear that they are trying to destroy all regularity in government & especially all religion ..."

May 8th 1803 "... I fear that I grow cold & careless to matters of religion ... the business that I am in takes up too much of my time. Had I my health I would gladly quit & try to be an honest farmer where I could live a more active life & get more time to serve my Maker ..."

Separate manuscript sheet (6" x 7½")

"Brief Account of Newgate Prison, in Connecticut" / "Some British sons in days of yore / Let loose their steps for copper ore ..." [&c.,&c.] With additional autograph notes/jottings: "The Property of T. Flavel Hayes, Granby, February the 20th, 1816"

[BTC#426333]