

Biography of John Joseph Hayes

by Eleanor Jane Hayes, daughter*

My father John Joseph Hayes, was born in Clonakilty, County Cork, Ireland, on January 28th 1825. He was the son of John and Jane *Hayes* Hayes. He was the fifth child in the family of [eight]: [five] boys and three girls as follows: Henry, George, Martha, Marya, John J., William, Jane, [and Edward].¹

His father was a shoemaker by trade and taught his boys the same. Father never had a pair of shoes on his feet until he made them himself. Father began his education in the parish school in Clonakilty. The only text book was the Holy Bible. He kept himself in school year after year by winning the scholarship prizes given for memorizing the greatest number of chapters. He was really a walking Bible.

At the time of the great famine in 1846 and 1847, he was very ill with cholera, in fact he was prepared for burial for they thought he had died, but his grandmother was not satisfied that he was dead. She poured some warm liquid in his mouth which revived him.²

About 1848 he left Ireland and went to London, England, and there followed the trade of journeyman shoemaker. While there he met some of the converts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Father was always of a serious mind, very studious, a great reader, well posted on current events, and was always seeking a consistent religion. When he heard the testimony of some of his fellow workers, he was very much impressed and interested, but having joined and preached for the Protestants, Methodists, and Ranters in succession, he was cautious and wanted to be sure it was right. He was at this time an Exhorter for the Methodist Church. Some of the people challenged the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to debate with father on their new doctrine. They accepted and the debate lasted three evenings. At the first meeting father was declared the winner, and also at the second meeting. Father was a fluent speaker, and had a voice that carried well and a good scriptorian. At the close of the third meeting he was not only declared the winner, but was picked up and carried on their shoulders as their victor.



John Joseph Hayes

*This history first appeared in legal size format with footnotes in 1976. It was converted to 8½" x 11" format by the John & Jane Hayes of Clonakilty Family Organization (JHFO) March 2001. Additional sources appear in the endnotes.

Before he had parted from his friends that night, he told them he was convinced that the elders taught the truth, and had Divine Authority to preach. He said, "When they asked me where I got my authority, etc., I could not answer, I could only shout and bluff. Studying and searching to overthrow their doctrine has given me understanding and I believe it is true." Father did not receive a testimony of its truth until he was baptized, but he received it before getting out of the water.³ As soon as he was confirmed he was ordained an elder and sent out as a missionary to preach the gospel as he believed it. He was very earnest and enthusiastic. He converted his brother George and others.

One day as he was preaching on a green, a man came from a saloon across the way and interfered with and tried to stop him from speaking. Father said, "Did the proprietor of the saloon send you here to interfere with me?" The man was frightened and said, "Yes." Father then said, "Go back to him and tell him that because he has interfered with the servants of the Lord, although prosperous now, his family shall die, and he himself shall die in poverty and disgrace." The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter [and] published in the *Millennial Star*.⁴

While traveling in Bedfordshire, he became acquainted with Mrs. Mary Jillions [Guillians] Wagstaff and her daughter Rachel who were members of the Latter-day Saints Church. His acquaintance with the daughter soon developed into courtship. When Mrs. Wagstaff decided to emigrate to Utah, father was released from his mission to accompany them. They left Liverpool on February 15th 1853 on the good ship *Elvira Owen* and were over six weeks on the ocean. There were three hundred and forty-five saints on board. Joseph W. Young had charge of the company. Father and mother (Rachel Eleanor Wagstaff) were married on board ship February 23rd [February 13] 1853.⁵ They arrived at New Orleans March 31st. After landing at New Orleans, they went by steamboat up the Mississippi River which took two or three weeks more. Elder John Brown, later bishop of Pleasant Grove, had charge of transferring the European Saints from ships to steamboats and arranging for transportation up the river to Iowa.

When they reached St. Louis they were met by mother's brother William Wagstaff. He was alone, having lost [two wives] and [all his children] with cholera.⁶ He joined them on their journey to Utah. They traveled in Daniel Miller's company which left Winter Quarters on June 9th. The company consisted of two hundred and eighty-two souls, seventy wagons, twenty-seven horses, four hundred head of cattle and one hundred and fifty-three sheep. Arrived in Great Salt Lake City on Friday September 9th 1853.⁷

The companies were organized with a captain over the whole train and under him were captains of fifty wagons and under them were captains of ten wagons. Father was captain of one ten. He had to see that everyone was in camp at night, also scout ahead, find a place to ford streams, locate obstacles, etc. Father's ten ran out of flour. There was flour to be bought on some divisions, but they had no money. As father was walking ahead, watching, praying, going over a trackless waste, he saw a purse containing a gold coin lying on the ground on the side of the road and thus the company was saved from hunger.

Mother was ill so she had to ride the latter part of the journey. On arriving in Salt Lake they asked Brigham Young to marry them again which he did.⁸ Father got work in the shoe shop of Fleming Martin. His shop mate, a brother Givens and all his family except one son were later killed by Indians in Southern Utah.

After a short time father and mother moved to Nephi, Juab County. Their first son John Joseph, Jr. was born and died there in 1854. Father walked from Nephi to Salt Lake to buy a pound of sugar for his sick wife [a distance of about 85 miles each way.]

They moved to Lehi, Utah County, to make their home, Their second son Hadahiah was born in Lehi in 1855 and only lived three weeks. They had some thrilling experiences with Indians. One day a man Indian came into their dugout and pushed mother off her chair onto the floor which greatly frightened her.

In the spring of 1856 father and mother went to Salt Lake and received their endowments. Two daughters and three sons were born to them in Lehi [Eleanor Jane, Mary Elizabeth, Isaac John, George Samuel, William Lehi].

Father always had poor health from dyspeptia and had always worked at his trade of shoemaking, so he thought if he could get on a farm his health would improve. [Dyspeptia would probably be known as stomach ulcers today.] People here thought all the land there was water for was already under cultivation, so he decided to go to San Pete County. In the spring of 1865 he got a wagon and a yoke of oxen, and with father, mother, five children, our household furniture, and farming tools all loaded on a single wagon box, we started for Sanpete. We left Lehi Monday and arrived in Nephi on Saturday night. One of us had to walk and drive the cow. Because of Indian trouble people were advised not to travel alone. Brother Samuel Claridge accompanied us thru Salt Creek Canyon.

We arrived at Moroni on Monday and stayed there three weeks, then went to Fountain Green where father purchased a house and lot from Ira Miles, who had been one of the bodyguards for Joseph Smith. We lived there about six weeks. Mother suffering terror for fear of Indians and father's health so bad they decided to go back to Utah County. We reached Pleasant Grove on July 25th 1865.

I well remember the trip thru Salt Creek Canyon. I was nine years old and sat in the front of the wagon holding baby brother Will. Father walked at the side of the oxen and had his gun handy. Mother walked on the opposite side with a butcher knife in her hand. Two wagons with horse teams started thru with us but as the horses traveled faster than the oxen, we were alone most of the way. We saw no Indians but did suffer with fear.

We made Pleasant Grove our permanent home. Another son and daughter were born to them in Pleasant Grove [Henry Nephi and Rachel Sarah Emma, who died at age 3]. Father had a garden and nursery and also worked at his trade. The ad over the gate to his nursery read:⁹

Here lives a man who sells good trees.
 He sells so cheap, he's sure to please,
 Sinner or Saint, Gentile or Jew,
 Come in and buy. You'll find it true.

He did much gratuitous (sic) work, mending shoes free for the families of widows, missionaries, and those who were in service against the Indians.

Father was especially interested in religion and education. He attended night school under Charles D. Evans at Lehi, and also studied astrology under John Sanderson. He was gifted as a poet and gave contributions for Old Folks Day and many of our other public celebrations. He acted as ward teacher for many years and was set apart as President of the Teachers on May 31st 1875. Later he was Senior President of the 44th Quorum of Seventy. He was well versed in scripture, strong in argument, enjoyed humor, and was one of our best local speakers. Was obedient to every call of the Priesthood and assisted in every way he could to build up the community. He died of natural causes on December 7th 1899 at Pleasant Grove.¹⁰ His descendants now number 86 (in the year 1927).

Children born to John Joseph and Rachel Eleanor Wagstaff Hayes:

John Joseph Hayes, Jr.	b. August 6, 1854	d. August 14, 1854
Hadahiah Wagstaff Hayes	b. July 27, 1855	d. August 14, 1855
Eleanor Jane Hayes	b. July 14, 1856	d. March 3, 1939
Mary Elizabeth Hayes	b. December 29, 1858	d. June 20, 1877
Isaac John Hayes	b. November 19, 1860	d. September 6, 1891
George Samuel Hayes	b. October 23, 1862	d. November 11, 1944
William Lehi Hayes	b. January 19, 1865	d. July 10, 1934
Henry Nephi Hayes	b. January 28, 1867	d. February 5, 1934
Rachel Sarah Emma	b. November 5, 1871	d. February 4 or 5, 1874

Notes

1. According to temple records, there was another son named Edward in the family. Logan Temple record No. 3209, December 28, 1886. Baptism done by John Joseph Hayes.
2. Family legend and the biography by William Lehi claims this incident happened when John Joseph was only a boy. If this is true the date would have been about 1835 not during the Irish famine, which occurred during the mid-1840s.
3. John Joseph Hayes was baptized by Elder Hilliker, 13 Aug 1850, Whitechapel Branch, London. London Conference Records, GS film no. 13656 pt. 6.
4. See article "Judgment Upon An Anti-"Mormon" that appears at the end of *Life Sketch of John J. Hayes*, by William L. Hayes, son. Of this incident, William said, "[About ten years ago] Richard Lambert, publisher

in S.L. City who was there, related the matter to me, and vouched for its truthfulness and its detail[ed] fulfillment, and he published it in a pamphlet 'Rays of Truth' at that time." A search of the *Millennial Star* was made covering a ten year period, but the article was not found; perhaps research for the tract "Rays of Truth," published about 1920-22, will provide its actual publication date.

5. Recent research (2001) shows that John Joseph Hayes and Rachel Eleanor Wagstaff were married on board ship *Elvira Owen* Sunday evening, February 13, 1853, by Joseph W. Young, Mormon Immigration Index - Personal Accounts, "Journal of Joseph W. Young Emigrating Company."

6. William Wagstaff. While he was still living in England, William married Mary Rook, July 1833. They had four children, Isaac, James and John (twins), and Mary. John only lived three days, and Mary Rook died February 1839. In December 1839, he married Mary Gilby Norman (a widow), and they had four children, Newman, Jacob, Daniel, Rachael, and Susannah. Newman died in 1846. William and Mary and their family of seven children left England and arrived in New Orleans in 1850 and boarded a steamship going up the Mississippi River to St. Louis. The boat stopped to refuel at Arkansas Bend, where little two year old Rachel died on November 28, 1850, and was buried in the wood yard. Mary Norman died of pneumonia December 12, 1850. Two days later, Jacob, age six, died. William thought his children needed a mother, so in January 1851, he married Martha Pack Perkins. At this time a plague, called the black plague, was raging in St. Louis, and the whole family fell ill. One by one, the other children, as well as Martha died. William was also gravely ill, but somehow he survived. During the space of 20 months he had lost two other wives and the rest of his children. Source: *Brief History of the Life of William Wagstaff*, an autobiography.

7. According to emigration records, they crossed the plains with Capt. Cladius V. Spencer's Company (not Daniel Miller's), which left from Keokuk, Iowa (not Winter Quarters), and arrived in Great Salt Lake City Sept. 17, 1853. Also in this company were Mary Wagstaff, mother of Rachel Eleanor and William Wagstaff. *Crossing the Plains Index, Church Emigration*, G. S. film 298, 441, 298, 442; and *Journal History*, Sept. 17, 1853, p. 3. *Andrew Jenson 's Church Emigration book, Vol I.II, 1849-1857*, LDS Church Historian 's office.

8. When they reached Salt Lake City, they were married again in Brigham Young's Office Nov. 27, 1853. They received their endowments in the Endowment House, April 29, 1856. S.L. Temple Records-Endowment House Book A, p. 109, GS no. 183,393, and TIB card End. House records no. 1632, Book B, Page 71.

9. According to notes in the possession of Ina Claire Hayes Carter, another sign over John Joseph's property read: "This is a story I can tell, John J. Hayes has good pigs to sell. J.J.H"

10. John Joseph's death date: December 7, 1899, *Desert News* obituary. Death date on grave marker in Pleasant Grove cemetery is December 9, 1899.