

5. Historical Document

Paul Hamilton Hayne was born January 1, 1830 in Charleston, South Carolina to Paul Hamilton Hayne and *Emily* McElhenny Hayne. He was their only child. While still an infant, his father died, and his mother had help in rearing *him* by his uncle, Robert Young Hayne (US Senator and South Carolina Governor). The Hayne family was one of prominence and culture in Charleston. Paul attended the Charleston city schools and the College of Charleston, from which he graduated in 1852.¹ Marrying Mary Middleton Michel of Charleston in 1852, they also had one son and named him William H. Hayne.

Hayne briefly practiced law, but abandoned that profession for a literary career.² At the time, Charleston was the literary center of the South.³ He became the editor of *Russel's Magazine* (1857-60), and the *Charleston Gazette*. He also contnouted the *Southern Literary Messenger*, *Home Journal*, and *Southern Bivouac*.⁴ He wrote for the *Charleston Evening News* and the *Richmond Southern Literary Messenger* and was associate editor of the weekly *Southern Gazette*.⁵ During these few years in journalism, his contributions included not *only* articles of southern interest, but poetry as well.

In 1861, he served in the Confederate Army as staff aide to Governor Pickens and remained in the Army until his health failed. Hayne lost all his possessions when Charleston was bombarded.⁶ His home in Charleston included a fine library. Everything being destroyed in the fire left him impoverished and caused him to relocate to Grovetown, Georgia.

In April 1866, he moved to the Forrest Station area, just slight!(above the Grovetown train stop (the general area known to us as Parham Road). He, his wife, mother, and son lived in a small whitewashed cottage built of lumber and pine clapboards. He was surrounded by eighteen acres of pine trees and fruit trees. His cottage sat on top of a hill sixteen miles from Augusta on the Georgia Railroad. This was peace for him As noted in one of his diary entries from 1866, he adequately dcsnbes the peace and tranquility that he felt in Grovetown at "Copse Hill". He wrote, "One can go clothed in an old dressing gown without fear of duns, or visitors. Peace reigns supreme.,,s

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- Elkins, James R., *Strangers to Us All: Lawyers and Poetry* (Paul Hamilton Hayne) (accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://www.wvu.edu/~lawfac/jelkins/lp-2001/ha:tne.html>; Internet
- 2 Paul Hamilton Hayne Papers (in MARION) (accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://cofc.edu/MARION/ACI-4722>; Internet
- J McLeod, Mike, "Poet Spent last years a few miles from Augusta", (*The Augusta Chronicle Online history* @ugusta accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://chat.augustachronicle.com/history/poet.html>; Internet
- 4 Elkins, James R., *Strangers to Us All: Lawyers and Poetry* (Paul Hamilton Hayne) (accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://www.wvu.edu/~lawfac/jelkins/lp-2001/havne.html>; Internet
- 5 Paul Hamilton Hayne, (*Britannica Student Encyclopedia* accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://www.britannica.com/ebil/artide?eu=350789> Internet
- 6 Elkins, James R., *Strangers to Us All: Lawyers and Poetry* (Paul Hamilton Hayne) (accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://www.wvu.edu/~lawfac/jelkins/lp-2001/havne.html>; Internet
- 7 Ruddy, Kathy B, compiler, *A Cornerstone of Life in the Village of Grovetown* (April 1999) 3
- 8 Ibid.

While living in Grovetown, Paul Hamilton Hayne lived on what he could, struggling in poverty and ill health, by writing verse and prose for publications such as Harper's New Monthly and The Atlantic Monthly. He also discovered ocher beds on his property and was able to make a small income – as this was ground into powder and shipped to make paint. Other income sources for him included serving as literary editor for several publications.

At "Copse Hill", he composed, read, went for walks, did woodcarving, hunting, and had *all* night long letter writing sessions to old friends and composers. He corresponded with the literary lions of his era, including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Sidney Lanier and Oliver Wendell Holmes.⁹ His desk in his little cottage was a carpenter's bench.

Hayne wrote three volumes of poetry: *Legends and Lyrics* in 1872, *Mountains of Lovers* in 1875 and *Poems, a Complete Edition* in 1882.¹⁰ He was fond of nature, and liked to use it as his subject in his poetry. In fact, in 1855, he wrote a book of nature poetry. His book, *Legends and Lyrics*, from 1872, is a collection of delicate, charming poems that is considered his most mature work.¹¹ He has been considered the last of the Southern literary cavaliers.¹²

U.S. writer Paul Hamilton Hayne was one of the best known poets of the Confederate cause.¹³ "Poet of the Pines" and "the Poet Laureate of the South" were two titles given him by his critics. His sonnets were acclaimed by the English Poet Laureate Alfred Lord Tennyson as the best written by any American.¹⁴

On July 6, 1886, Paul Hamilton Hayne died. His funeral was held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Augusta, and he is buried in Magnolia Cemetery in Augusta.

His obituary from The Augusta Chronicle dated July 18, 1886, was titled "A Poet at Rest". And in his suffering and trials, studying the life of our blessed Lord, he learned to **po**w more and more.¹⁵ God help us to learn the lesson and follow his example.¹

In 1889, an Episcopal Church, known as Heavenly Rest, was built in Grovetown as a memorial to Hayne.¹⁷ In 1932, Grovetown had a Wayfarer Reverend who was also a journalist, and as he would **take** strolls through Grovetown came upon the abandoned little church.

9 McLeod, Mike, "Poet Spent last years a few miles from Augusta", (The Augusta Chronicle Online history@ugusta accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://chataugustachronicle.com/hisrorv/ooethml>; Internet

10 Lord, Charles, "Cottage of a Craftsman", The Augusta Chronicle, 31 August 1997 (copy obtained from the Grovetown Museum, 26 August 1004)

11 Paul Hamilton Hayne, American Literature, Biographies, (AllRefEncyclopedia accessed 25 August 2004); available <http://reference.allrefer.com/lencvclooedia/H/Hayne-Pa.html> Internet

12 Ibid.

13 Paul Hamilton Hayne (Britannica Student Encyclopedia aeteSsed 25 August 2004); available from <http://www.britannica.com/ebillartide?eu=350789> Internet

14 McLeod, Mike, "Poet Spent last years a few miles from Augusta", (The Augusta Chromcle Online history@ugusta accessed 25 August 2004); available from <http://chat.augustachronicle.com/historv/poet.html>; Internet

15 "Poet At Rest", The Augusta Chronicle, 18 July 1886, Obituaries. (copy obtained from the Grovetown Museum)

16 Ibid.

17 Lord, Charles, "Cottage of a Craftsman", The Augusta Chronicle, 31 August 1997 (copy obtained from the Grovetown Museum, 26 August 1004)

There were no pews, no pulpit. The church was empty. Most of the stained glass was gone from the windows. There was one wall, however, that held a white marble tablet with this inscription: "This church is erected to the Glory of God and in memory of Paul Hamilton Hayne, Poet, Christian, Philanthropist, January 1, 1830 – July 6, 1886."¹⁸

Through 1963, his poem, *Aspect of the Pines* was used in the literature books in Columbia County. This poem was written about the pines that surrounded his peaceful "Copse Hill".

As recent as April 30, 2004, Ralph Steven Newbill submitted his thesis to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University as a partial requirement for his Master of Arts in English. His thesis is an argument for the Literary Reception of Paul Hamilton Hayne and His Place in American and Southern Literary Canons. Mr. Newbill States "Although Paul Hamilton Hayne was the acknowledged poet laureate of the south at the time of his death in 1886, he and his poetry have virtually disappeared from the recent American literary histories and anthologies."¹⁹ Moreover, Hayne's literary reputation became more tenuous after the War Between the States given his strong affiliation with the conquered Confederacy.²⁰ Mr. Newbill concluded after analysis of several of Paul Hamilton Hayne's poems that he should in fact be included in the literary canons of Americans and Southern literature representing nineteenth century southern poetry within Anglo-American tradition.

Today, the only tribute in Grovetown is a street named for him.²¹ Not only was he an outstanding writer and poet, he was an upstanding citizen of Grovetown. It was through his influence with U.S. Representative Alexander Stephens that Grovetown obtained postal service in 1877 and became an incorporated city in 1881.²² Paul Hamilton Hayne truly deserves to be recognized and honored with an historical marker in Grovetown.

18 Ruddy, Kathy B., compiler, A Cornerstone of Life in the Village of Grovetown (April 1999) I08

19 Newbill, Ralph Steven, "The Literary Reception of Paul Hamilton Hayne and His Place in the American and Southern Literary Canons" (Master of Arts Thesis Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2004), Abstract

20 Ibid.

21 Lord, Charles, "Cottage of a Craftsman", The Augusta Chronicle, 31 August 1997 (copy obtained from the Grovetown Museum, 26 August 2004)

22 Ibid.

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