

A "Well-Seasoned" Traveler
by Dorothy Davis

The refrain "How You Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm After They've Seen Pree?"¹ comes to the mind of a reader of Luther Haymond's Journal.

Haymond starts his journal by writing that his "travels heretofore have been too insignificant [to] be worthy of record as I have never been in but three counties, to wit, Harrison, in which I was born,² Lewis and Monongalia previous to this date April 25, 1830."³ Mercy! once on his way, the boy in three years made three trips to Baltimore; one to Fayette County; one to Staunton; and one to the State of Indiana, all on his faithful horse Christopher Columbus.

Luther Haymond started off on the early spring day April 27, 1830, from Thornberry, his paternal home⁴, to buy wares in Baltimore for a Clarksburg merchant. The lad had just reached his majority and was filled with the eagerness of youth as he headed north for Monongalia County, where he would spend the first night of his trip at the home of his uncle William Haymond.

From his uncle's house he could soon be on the State Road which ran through Kingwood, across Backbone Mountain and the North Branch of the Potomac River to Romney, Charlestown, and then Harper's Ferry, where the lad would be just a day and a half away from Baltimore; but on April 28, 1830, the State Road and all points it touched were a long way off to the boy. He rode through a barren country with very few settlers, found a house where a woman told him she had no oats but could furnish his horse corn. He had a noonday meal and by nightfall reached Kingwood "a wretched little town" and stopped at Mr. William Johnson's Tavern. Haymond carefully noted he paid 75¢ next morning for lodging and food for himself and horse "crossed Cheat River and have come about 3 miles up the d--d Cheat Mountain, where I am now sitting on a log near a fine fountain of pure water writing. On my left is a kind of a glady, swampy, poor, rocky and hell-fired kind of looking place. Christopher Columbus (my horse) is attempting to eat a little grass and in doing so he scronches [sic] the tarnation flints till the fire rolls out of his mouth. Now I go on, topped the mountain which was destitute of large trees and covered with stones, rock, and flint in such a manner that all the devils in hell could not pull a plow of adimant [adamant] through it. At about 12 o'clock I arrive at a house near Yough [Youghiogheny River], where belly screamed, at which I eat a damned dirty dinner got by a very active snotty-nosed little girl for which (and horse feed) I payed the moderate price of 37½ cents."⁵

When Haymond reached New Creek he saw he would overtake a lady riding ahead. At first he imagined she was right good looking but he could not be certain because of her veil which seemed to project a vast distance in front. "After awhile she drew it aside and discovered to me a nose the most dominant I ever saw and it was her nose that pushed her veil in front."⁶

He asked east of Romney direction to Pugh Town, but "before I mentioned the name of the place where I was going, a very neat and handsome young lady told me to take the right-hand road, went on about 1 mile and was passing a tavern kept by Mr. Vance... took a good slug of peach brandy, eat my dinner, talked politics, continued there about 1 hour and put off. note: Mr. Vance has a pretty daughter."⁷

Harper's Ferry impressed Haymond: "This town is ably constucted. At the West End the houses are not dense. Near the river Ptowmak the hill is very steep and covered both below and above the road with small dwelling houses and to the left on the river is situated the gun factory. There is a splendid bridge across the Ptowmak here which appears to have at some prior [time] rushed through and broke down the Blue Ridge with all hell at its back."⁸

In Baltimore Haymond put up at Mr. Hussey's and went immediately with his friend David S. Haselden, to the house where Haselden did business. Haymond met up with Mr. Burdett of Pruntytown, Va., who took him to a great number of merchants and introduced Haymond. "God bless that man", said Haymond of Burdett.⁹

Haymond and Haselden went to a museum, to an oyster house, to the theater. "In this city wagons and drays of all kinds are constantly running in every direction over the pavements and make the hustle and confusion of hell in comparison to this place---or paradise."¹⁰ Haymond visited Washington's Monument and Fort McHenry which he described briefly because he did not have enough time to examine the fort minutely.

The new railroad was mind boggling to Haymond:

This day I visited the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which at this time is partially completed about 10 miles from Baltimore to Elicot's Mills and the greatest part of the work required for the construction of this immense work is the reduction of the hills and the filling up of the vallies so as to render the way (as it has to be or nearly) level after which there are pieces of timber (round logs of pine) bedded in the earth crosswise of the road and notches cut in each end about 5 feet asunder in which there are fastened the rails in a perfect strait line on which are nailed bars of iron that the locomotive engines rest upon. At this time there are pleasure carriages fitted for running upon the road which are drawn by horses or by fixing sails to them blown at the immense velocity of 20 miles per hour by the wind. The wheels to those carriages are cast and about 2 feet in diameter with an edge on the innerside that fit down by the side of the rails to prevent it getting off. Myself and 3 or 4 others rode about 5 miles in a dirt wagon drawn by a horse. One horse can draw upon this road with ease and at a speed of 10 miles per hour a burden of about 6 tons. Those who will not believe this let them go and judge for themselves and afterward I have no doubt will tell a bigger lie that I have told if I have told one, but I think I have not be it as it may. It is not probable that I who am writing for my own satisfaction and improvement would make any incorrect statement.¹¹

The last day he spent in Baltimore Haymond employed a wagoner and loaded a wagon with wares to be hauled to Clarksburg.¹² He left next morning in traffic so heavy he wrote, "I passed today in the Turnpike between Baltimore and Frederick 135 wagons destined for Baltimore. Those who will not believe that I did not meet 135 wagons [while] traveling 45 miles may go to hell."¹³

Even though Haymond had stopped for the night in Pugh Town, he rode only fourteen miles west of the village before he pulled up at a tavern for dinner. He said he really did not want food, but he wanted to ask for it so that he might become acquainted with the pretty girl who had told him a week and a half earlier to take the road to the right before he had spoken where he wished to go. Haymond said that the girl got him a very good dinner.

Haymond's horse turned out of the road of its own volition on a high hill seven or eight miles west of Romney. Haymond looked about him and discovered it to be a spot where he had stopped to rest on the journey to Baltimore. Haymond said that Christopher Columbus stopped or wanted to stop at every place he had stopped on the way east; and concluded "that a horse has recollection and none but a d---d fool would believe to the contrary."¹⁴

Three more days' slogging over roads in the rain and Haymond was home at Thornberry, where he labeled himself "well seasoned to traveling." Guilt ridden because he had used profanity in the journal, Haymond added these words at the end of the log of his trip: "The foregoing narrative is different (in consequence of the profane language that it contains) from what I now wish it was. Be it known that I wish every profane word blasted from this book that it contains. The profane language was put in for the diversion of my friends on my return."¹⁵

The "well-seasoned" traveler on the two additional trips to Baltimore tells nothing of people or sights he sees along the way. He covered an average of forty miles a day to taverns he must have learned were the best along the way, for he stayed in the same ones each time. On one trip he told the total cost of the travel for lodging and food for himself and two horses from Thornberry to Baltimore: \$11.62.¹⁶ Each time he visited Baltimore he spent seven days on the road to reach the city and seven days on the road to return home. Each time he stayed six or seven days in Baltimore.

The second trip east happened just six months after his first trip away from home. He left on November 10, 1830. One motivating factor for hurrying back to Baltimore may have been knowledge that the engine he had seen sitting on tracks in May would now be running. At any rate, when he reached Elicot's Mills, Haymond left his horse "and got aboard of a railroad car and traveled in to Baltimore from thence, a distance of 13 miles in about an hour and a half. Paid 37½ cents passage at the depot. I hired a hack and was taken to Hussey's Tavern, where I arrived about or a little after dark."¹⁷

Haymond was home again on December 1. He had nothing to eat the last day out except what he had carried from the tavern where he had spent the night before because he said he was scarce of money. He arrived home very much fatigued after having experienced much mud, snow, and rain; but, and he underscored the words, he still had one round silver half dollar.¹⁸ The third journey to Baltimore occurred from October 29, 1831, to November 25, 1831.

The next spring when his friend William C. Woodson asked him to travel with Woodson to visit his half brother Captain Blake B. Woodson in the new Virginia county named Fayette, Luther Haymond was ready to go.

The two rode out on April 17, 1832, to spend the first night in Weston. The second night the two youths stayed with Luther's kin Colonel John Haymond on the Little Kanawha River and then struck out over six mountains to Burch River without seeing a single house. "The 4th day we rode about 38 miles, passed through Sommersville, the county seat of Nicholas: crossed Gauley River just below the mouth of Meadow River, 10 miles south of Sommersville, and went on about 10 miles further to the place of our destiny on the Turnpike¹⁹ about 14 miles above the falls of the Great Kanawha."²⁰

Haymond reports that he "continued at Capt. Blake B. Woodson's (the clerk of Fayette County) and in the neighborhood for eight to ten days"²¹, that he visited Hawk's Nest, which he described in detail; but he tells nothing of the state of affairs in the Woodson household.

Blake B. Woodson had married Julia Neale Jackson in Clarksburg on November 4, 1830.²² After the Virginia Assembly in 1831 authorized the formation of Fayette County and Blake Woodson had been named county clerk, Woodson, his wife and two of his wife's children, Laura and Thomas Jonathan (Stonewall) Jackson, moved to Fayette County. Julia Neale Jackson Woodson died the same year on December 3, 1831.²³ William C. Woodson must have gone to Fayette County to help with an emergency in his family²⁴ not mentioned by Luther Haymond in his Journal.

Haymond traveled home from Fayette County by himself with no mishaps. "However my horse (Christopher Columbus) got lame and I was compelled to drive him and ride the horse William had rode out, belonging to Jasper Y. Doddridge."²⁵

Luther Haymond was home in Harrison County on May 19, 1832, but he would soon be on the go again. Selected as a delegate from Harrison County to a convention in Staunton to nominate candidates for president and vice president of the United States, Haymond left with other delegates on July 11, 1832, for a four-day trip to Staunton. The convention adjourned, after having nominated Henry Clay for president and John Sargeant for vice president, at 11:00 a.m. on July 19; and an hour later Haymond and three other gentlemen started a thirty-four mile ride to a tavern kept by a Mr. Hall. The next day the men crossed Allegheny Mountain to the Greenbrier River and on July 21 traveled 32 miles to Beverly.

On arriving home, Haymond felt destiny could carry him far, for he wrote in his journal: "All the preceeding [sic] travels recorded in this book were performed on my faithful horse Christopher Columbus and how many more I shall record of like performance I am unable to say."²⁶

Geoffrey Chaucer caught what springtime does to men in words which said that when little birds seem to sleep all night with open eye and to make melody at dawn, then folk also on pleasant pilgrimages long to go. Luther Haymond had stayed in Harrison County and had worked hard for three-fourths of a year when nature began to stir in the spring of 1833. The twenty-four-year-old envisioned a pleasant pilgrimage: he would ride Christopher Columbus to see his brother Rufus Haymond who lived in the State of Indiana.

Luther Haymond left home May 11, 1833, to spend the first night of his trip with relatives in Salem and the second with Daniel Haymond before reaching the Ohio River and stepping for the first time on the soil of the State of Ohio. When he reached Athens he remained long enough to visit the college and described Chillicothe, where "the land in the neighborhood of this town (which is a considerable place) is the best that I had ever seen."²⁷ He found Cincinnati a large town "containing a population of upwards 33,000."²⁸

On May 22 Haymond arrived at Brookville, Indiana, the town in which his brother Rufus lived. Haymond stayed three weeks at the home of his brother during which time he sensed the tone of the community: "The inhabitants of this town are very clever and agreeable. There being no slaves in this state (Indiana), the people are all upon an equality unless it is where merit or demerit renders it otherwise."²⁹

Haymond used one paragraph to describe his trip home from Indiana: "In due course of time I left for home and traveled the distance (300 miles) in 7 days. Got home I think on the 19th of June 1833, sound wind and limb. Christopher performed with usual credit. Traveled one day about 50 or 55 miles."³⁰

Footnotes

1. Title and refrain of song by Sam M. Lewis and Joe Young (1919). John Bartlett, Familiar Quotations, p. 999b.
2. "About 8 o'clock a.m. in the morning." February 23, 1809. Luther Haymond, Journal, p. 1.
3. Ibid.
4. Zack's Run, Quiet Dell, Harrison County, VA (WV). Luther Haymond was the son of Thomas Haymond (1776-1853) and Rebecca Bond Haymond (1780-1869). Dorothy Davis, History of Harrison County, p. 422.
5. Haymond, Journal, pp. 2-4.
6. Ibid., pp. 6-7
7. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
8. Ibid., pp. 9-10
9. Ibid., p. 13
10. Ibid., p. 14
11. Ibid., pp. 15-17.
12. The merchandise may have been bound for the store of Ed McCullough in Clarksburg. Luther Haymond clerked in McCullough's store in 1826. Davis, History of Harrison County, p. 212.
13. Haymond, Journal, p. 21.
14. Ibid., pp. 25, 27-8
15. Ibid., pp. 34-5
16. Ibid., p. 45
17. Ibid., pp. 37-8.
18. Ibid., pp. 41-2
19. James River and Kanawha Turnpike called the "Great State Road."
20. Haymond, Journal, pp. 47-8.
21. Ibid., p. 48.
22. Roy Bird Cook, The Family and Early Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 44.
23. Ibid., p. 27
24. "Correspondence of Thomas Neale shows that following the death of Joackson's mother and also that of Blake B. Woodson, his half brother, William C. Woodson, wrote to the Parkersburg relatives requesting that they send for the children. Mr. Neale, after conferring with General John J. Jackson, a relative, made arrangements to send for Laura and Thomas. Mr. Benjamin Willard and Mr. A. H. Creel, who made a business trip across the country to Charleston from Parkersburg, took a third horse along and rode approximately thirty miles to Gauley Bridge, to the home of a Mr. Buster, where the children were supposed to be. When Willard and Creel arrived at the Buster home, they found that Cummins Jackson, of Jackson's Mill, had been there about ten days before and taken the children to the old home place below Weston." Cook, The Family and Early Life of Stonewall Jackson., p. 47
25. Haymond, Journal, p. 50.
26. Ibid., p. 53
27. Ibid., p. 55
28. Ibid., p. 56.
29. Ibid., pp. 58-9.
30. Ibid., p. 59.

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