

Bartholomew Hayden (1792-1857) Navy Officer in Brazil



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Hayden, Bartholomew (1792-1857), navy officer in Brazil, was born in County Tipperary on 22 February 1792, the son of John and Joanna Hayden. Like many young men of his age, Hayden joined the armed forces of King George III of Great Britain during the Napoleonic Wars and served in the Royal Navy as a Midshipman for twelve years, from 1803 to 1815. Following the British victory over Napoleon, the Royal Navy was demobilised and reduced to a fraction of its former strength. There were jobs available for just 15 per cent of its former officers, but Hayden was one of the fortunate ones. In 1817, he was appointed senior Midshipman to the frigate HMS *Andromache* which was sent to South America as part of the squadron defending British interests during the wars of independence from Spain which were commencing in the Pacific.

In February 1821, Hayden moved to the HMS *Conway*, commanded by Captain Basil Hall FRS, as Second Master (that is, Assistant Navigating Officer) when the two ships were in Peru. Hall was an enterprising and scientifically minded officer who on his return published a popular two-volume book detailing the *Conway's* activities in South America. Hayden never did return home. Knowing that he lacked the necessary 'pull' to secure a further appointment in the navy, he resigned and, with the help of friends, purchased a brig called the *Colonel Allen* to pursue a career as a trader. Fortuitously, when Admiral Lord Thomas Cochrane, following his victories over the Spanish as Vice Admiral of Chile, was looking for a ship to take him to Brazil, *Colonel Allen* was the vessel he chose. The Brazilian war of independence against Portugal was then reaching a climax. The Prince Regent, Dom Pedro, had raised the standard of revolt against Portugal and been proclaimed Emperor a year earlier, but enemy garrisons still occupied half of the country, and unless Brazil's newly formed navy could seize command of the sea, chances of success looked bleak. The Brazilian Government was desperately seeking ships and experienced officers and Hayden offered his services. His ship was purchased, converted into a man-of-war and renamed *Bahia*, while Hayden himself was appointed to the Brazilian Navy with the rank of Commander (Capitão-Tenente).

In that capacity, Hayden served with Cochrane, by now commander-in-chief of the Brazilian Navy, in his successful campaign against Portugal. Hayden was present when the enemy were driven from their principal base of Bahia in 1823 and back to Portugal, and he was active in the suppression of the dangerous republican rebellion in the north-east the following year. In command of the brig *Pirajá* during Brazil's two year war against Buenos Aires from 1826 to 1828, Hayden captured the Argentine privateer *Libertad del Sur* and was promoted to Captain of Frigate as a consequence. Then, transferring to the

corvette *Liberal* in the inshore squadron blockading Buenos Aires, he took part in the minor battles of Quilmes and Monte Santiago, both of which inflicted serious damage on the Argentine naval forces led by a fellow Irishman, Commodore William Brown. With the termination of the War, Hayden was posted to the corvette *Animo Grande* as commander of the Brazilian Naval Division of the East, which was deployed off Angola with orders to help suppress the slave trade.

In June 1829, Hayden married Anna da Fonseca Costa in Rio de Janeiro, a marriage which produced five children. However the achievement of external peace was balanced by a sequence of internal rebellions within Brazil. In an optimistic moment following independence, the power of the central government had been deliberately weakened. Now, only the loyalty of the armed forces kept the country united. As commander of the frigates *Imperatriz* and *Campista*, Hayden was prominent in the suppression of the 'Cabanos' rebellion which afflicted Pará in 1835-1836. As a reward, he was promoted to full Captain (Capitão-de-Mar-e-Guerra) in October 1836. In 1839, Hayden was given leave of absence from the navy to join a steam packet company as commander of the paddle steamer *Maranhão*. He returned to the navy in 1840 in command of the training ship *Campista*. He formally retired from service in 1842. The spat of regional rebellions which had afflicted Brazil during the 1830s had, however, convinced the young Emperor Pedro II that a strong central government was needed and that an efficient and modern navy was vital to Brazil's internal security. Hayden's technical expertise was obviously valuable at a time when the Brazilian navy was taking on the challenges of steam power and new advances in weaponry. In 1849, he was therefore restored to the Active List in the rank of Commodore (Chef-de-Divisão) and in 1851 became a member of the influential Naval Armaments Commission. Now aged sixty-six, Hayden's health began to deteriorate. He was granted sick leave to return to Europe temporarily in 1856 but was unable to return, dying at Portsmouth in southern England on 17 September 1857.

Brian Vale

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