



## JOHN PRICE HAYTER

**JOHN PRICE HAYTER.** For more than a half score of years the subject of this review has been prominently identified with the business affairs of Decatur, and among his many achievements here the building up on the chief retail drug house on the Fort Worth and Denver road in Texas, the manufacture and distribution of the famous Finley Eye Salve, bringing to his town the honor and distinction of the presidency of the State Pharmaceutical Association, and his elevation to the chief magistracy of his favorite city are noteworthy in the beginning and serve to mark John P. Hayter as a progressive, capable and fearless citizen and man of affairs.

A native Texan, he was born near Whitesboro, Grayson county, November 23, 1862, of pioneer parents, **Thomas M. and Sarah (Howard) Hayter**, who settled near Gordonville in 1856. The parents were originally from Livingston, Tennessee, but emigrated from there in the early fifties and settled for a time near Walnut Grove, Missouri, and from that point came to Texas and settled on a new farm in Grayson county. This farm they improved, reared their family upon there died, the father in 1901, and the mother in 1902.

Thomas M. Hayter was born in 1819, laid the foundation for a good education in his youth and served in the Mexican war from his native state. He was a successful farmer and when the issue of slavery divided our country he took the southern end of the dilemma, while some of his brothers in Missouri served with the Federal arms. He was not in the army himself but lent encouragement to the cause and united his influence with the Democratic party when civil affairs were restored in the state. His ancestors were subjects of the British crown who sought America during colonial times and founded the New World branch of this worthy family. The issue of the marriage of Thomas M. and Sarah Hayter were: "**Bud**," a farmer of Gordonsville, Texas; **James M. and William M.**, of Spring Creek, Texas; **Annie**, wife of **Thomas B. Givens**, of Roff, Indian Territory; **Harriet**, who married **J. K. Stallings**, of Mannsville, Indian Territory; John P., of this sketch; and **Robert L.**, of Blue Ridge, Texas.

The farm was the birthplace and playground of John P. Hayter and the country log school house his academy and college. Until twenty-four years of age he remained with the farm, at which time and with a capital of fifty-five dollars he established himself in the drug business in Gordonsville, in the neighborhood where he grew up. He was elected justice of the peace at this time and the two departures gave him a new and valuable experience in dealing with men. He remained in Gordonsville three years and in Whitesboro four years and then came to Decatur and purchased the stock of **J. W. Sparrow** and Company, which he made the popular drug house of Decatur and one of the largest and best known in this part of the state. He conducted this establishment until the month of October, 1904, when he disposed of it to devote his time more fully to the manufacture of his eye salve, its mail-order business and to the various other business matters with which he is connected.

The Finley Eye Salve, on which Mr. Hayter owns the patent, is a remedy widely known and extensively advertised, and the name of J. P. Hayter is a household word in thousands of communities all over our broad land. For sixteen years he has pushed its merits, and an almost phenomenal business has been the out-growth of his truth-telling crusade.

The fact of his engaging in the drug business brought Mr. Hayter into contact with the Pharmaceutical Association of the state of Texas. He became a member of it in 1899 and his proverbial good nature, congeniality and business sagacity prompted the association to attach him to its official family. For three years he served as its vice president, and in June, 1905, he was elected president of the association, an office entailing a responsibility over several million dollars worth of property the Empire State of the Southwest. He became a member of the Tri-county Retail Drug association some time since and is its secretary and treasurer. Other business enterprises find in Mr. Hayter an active aid, viz: The Wise County Home Protective Association, of which he is secretary, and the Home Protective Association of Texas, of which he is treasurer, the First National Bank of Decatur, of which he is a director, and the Decatur Land, Loan and Abstract Company, of which he is president and manager. He is a director of the Ray Hardware Company of Fort Worth and of the **S. P. Smith** Lumber Company, Decatur. He is master of finance of Decatur Lodge, K. of P., is secretary of the board of stewards, Bowie District, North Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church and chairman of the board of stewards of the Methodist Episcopal church, south, of Decatur.

On the 22d of November, 1885, Mr. Hayter married, in Sunset, Texas, **Miss Jennie Thomason**, a daughter of **Dr. W. F. Thomason**, formerly from Tennessee. This union has resulted in the following living issue: viz: **Chlora, Grady, Irma, Lenella, Sallie May, J. P. Jr., and Byrne.**

While our subject has apparently been well occupied in a business way he has not neglected the political side of his nature. He was rocked in the cradle of Jeffersonian principles and breathed the ozone of the primary principles of Democracy from the Texas air and he has a clear title to his claim. His political action has been such as to convince his townsmen of his

absolute sincerity and honesty and they honored him with election to the majority of Decatur in April, 1905. With Mr. Hayter whatever his wisdom inspires his industry accomplishes. He has an abnormal capacity for labor and the multifarious duties of his various connections are attended to with a promptness and expertness marking the versatility and adaptability of the man.

**B. B. Paddock, *History and Biographical Record of North and West Texas* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1906), Vol. II, pp. 342-343.**

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