

HAAS (SAMUEL) LETTERPRESS COPYBOOK
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SUMMARY

Size.	1 volume (on 1 microfilm reel)
Geographic locations.	St. Landry Parish (today, Acadia Parish)
Inclusive dates.	1886-1887
Bulk dates.	N/A
Language.	English
Summary.	Letters from a Louisiana merchant to business associates, family members, and friends.
Organization.	Letters copied chronologically within a bound volume.
Restrictions on access.	If microfilm is available, photocopies must be made from microfilm.
Related collections.	Samuel Haas Record Books, Mss. 3400
Copyright.	Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
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BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Samuel Haas, of Jewish descent, was born in Alsace, France. He immigrated to the United States around 1852 and operated a store in Bayou Chicot, Evangeline Parish, Louisiana. Haas married Martha A. Cole in 1862, and they had five children. During the Civil War, Haas was first lieutenant and captain in the Prairie Rangers, Company K, 3rd Louisiana Cavalry. He returned to his mercantile business, which eventually became one of the largest mercantile establishments in St. Landry Parish. This business allowed Haas to acquire hundreds of acres in four central Louisiana parishes. He was a member of the St. Landry Parish Police Jury, 1892-1907, and the Democratic Parish Executive Committee. Haas was also postmaster in Bayou Chicot for a time.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Letters are written primarily to business associates and friends in Avoyelles, Rapides, and St. Landry (later Acadia) parishes and New Orleans. Haas discusses orders for, and the sale of, merchandise from New Orleans and elsewhere; shipment of goods via Washington and Bunkie, La.; marketing of cotton, horses, cattle, hides and wool, timber and lumber; accounts with debtors; and legal and land issues. A few personal letters, mainly to family members, are also present. Major subjects Haas covers include trading cattle from the "Piney Woods" area; buying and selling Creole and other breeds of horses and ponies, mules, and asses; details on the June 1886 flood in his region; references to local politics and Police Jury business; Jewish philanthropy; and lawsuits and crime. In a June 1886 letter, Haas provides a three-and-a-half page description of the St. Landry Parish vicinity and its people. Furthermore, there are two items dated October 1886 that refer to the creation and eventual formation of Acadia Parish out of St. Landry.

LETTER DESCRIPTIONS

Prior to the numbered pages, an index by name and page is given.

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
4	Refers to his brother, Captain A. M. Haas.
10	Letter of condolence to Jewish friends.
14	Relates news of children and where they are studying. Son after 3 years has graduated from Philadelphia Medical College and now practices in Opelousas, daughter graduated at Holly Springs, Mississippi, and lives with him; 12 yr. old son at school in Tennessee, sons 9 and 7 yrs. are at home.
27	Nephew, D. W. Haas.
53	Grand Jury to meet and investigate shooting to see if African American man drew his pistol first, the man's son is safe if that is so.
61	Expresses hope that he will become a Master Mason although certain men may threaten to speak against him.
71	To R. T. Marshall at Hiwassee College, Tenn., where several boys from St. Landry, La., are attending and giving advice on purchasing tickets on the train to come home
81	Sends \$5.00 to help rebuild the synagogue in Ingville, Germany (his sister lived in that town).
96, 98	Alludes to a shooting scrape
116	Concerning the selling of lots in Bunkie, La.
129	Discusses excellent fishing grounds at Belle Cheney Springs, La., where over 400 perch were caught at one time.
149	(June, 1886)—writes to W. W. Cooper of Pennsylvania describing the St. Landry country concerning water, soil, etc., fertilizers used, temperature, few African Americans but many Northerners and Westerners located there. Answers questions given him.
153	Mentions that timber from that area is shipped in barges or rafts. Letters on cotton crop and getting criminals out on bond.

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
174-218	June 19, 1886 contains details on the flood in that area and his rescue efforts; water 10 feet deep in places; all bridges were destroyed; elderly of 70 years never saw water that high; asks legal opinion of Gilbert Dupre concerning a cattleman who drove his herd to the hill of another farmer and was charged rent; poor crop prospects due to flood.
216-220	Has received buggy from Naydock Bros., St. Louis; also writes M. D. Kavanagh at Baton Rouge and asks aid for the flood victims.
222	Mentions Creole mares and horses and asks about the chances of selling them and whether he would advise trying to sell broken ones.
226	Writes a schoolmaster and says that a good teacher will do well at that place.
228	To A. B. Irion, member of U. S. Congress, Washington, D. C., July 10, 1886—explains his ward as being pro-Irion and blames Dossman for Irion's getting only one vote in his ward, with the rest voting Republican ticket; Chicot ward gave Irion all of its vote; asks Irion's aid in establishing other post offices and mail service.
246	Orders tobacco "a little off" from New Orleans
256	To Irion, July 20, 1886—promises that the delegation from St. Landry Parish to the District Convention will be for him; deals with needed mail route; Letters trying to collect debts.
281-282	July 23, 1886—wool for sale and is going to woods to hunt cattle
283	Is forwarding hides and wool to Alexandria
287	Had 40 ponies for sale but sent them to Ouachita, many were unbroken
291	Concerning the purchase of ponies (July, 1886)
293	Wants someone to visit his area to teach how to castrate horses
303	Bought 3 mares
311	Discusses horses
312	Aug. 1886—discusses cattle
318	Cattle gathered in the Piney Woods

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
319, 321	On trying to sell a plantation; neighbors speak both English and French
326	Mentions that the prairies and Pine Woods have suffered from wind, rain, and overflows (Aug., 1886)
331	Wants special price for cypress lumber
332	Writes that a friend wants to sell cypress logs
344	Stock for sale
348, 350	Sends resignation as member of the Parish Executive Committee due to absence for several weeks during its meeting (Aug. 9, 1886).
351	Purchase of cypress to cover a house of Haas'
354	As a member of the Parish Democratic Party Executive Committee and the "Little Committee," Haas has resigned so he won't be inconsistent in action between the two.
386	Writes that he has bought buggies from Cincinnati and is trying to sell them locally.
391	Oct. 5, 1886—thinks his end of St. Landry Parish is entitled to be their own parish; locally, there is no interest in the forthcoming election; heavy costs of prosecuting crimes in other parts of the parish.
403	Was on a two month trip to the North and West (Oct. 7, 1886)
412	Concerning contested ownership of mares
414	Advice to men who want to homestead
416	Emphasizes the value of a good education
417, 430	Orders 'jacks' and tells what he is looking for in them
423	Orders a spark pipe to keep sparks from the flue falling on his gin house and burning it; nearly lost it recently.
436	Discounts a man's payment on debt for the "parish paper"
443	Is serving as a cotton buyer for R. L. Walker, Lloyd's Bridge, cotton crop and lists shipments by names of men

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
460	Rev. J. Parker's credit was extended by him due to loss of crop demonstrates Haas' concern for his fellow man.
462	Cattle shipment sent to Washington, Louisiana.
470	Will have to seize African American man's corn, etc., for rent owed Dossman.
470-472	Letter to nephew, Oct. 22, 1886, says that they have divided parish and "Acadia" will be in full bloom in a few weeks.
	Purchases of lumber
505	Asks George Elms for a "blank" for Confederate soldiers, Jacob W. Pentawse(?) of the 1 st Louisiana Battalion (Wheat's), wounded at Manassas, also brother, Daniel.
510	Inquires concerning men in the state penitentiary for horse stealing.
511	Wants to buy a "jack" and Holstein bull after the Texas State Fair closes
544	On the breaking of a "jack."
547-548	Nov. 13, 1886—speaks of labor and anarchist agitations in the North, relieved that the extreme South has been spared so far.
549	To his brother, Capt. A. M. Haas at Haasville.
549, 550	Speaks of Creole horses and asks if any horse thieves(?) have been arrested recently
566	On the renting of a farm he owned
570-572	Oct. 15, 1886—on buying "jacks" in New Orleans and Holstein yearling.
576	Places an order for children's schoolbooks and lists them by title, Nov. 22, 1886.
587	Buys hunting supplies such as shells, primers, etc.
596	States his prejudice against "drinking" men.
611	Letter to his sister, Fanny Moch, at Ingville(?), Germany.
626	Cloth goods ordered and listed by types
627	Dec. 8, 1886—orders from New Orleans: toys and other items presumably for

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
	Christmas
659	Writes V. and A. Meyer & Co., New Orleans, asking about Judge Gervais Baillio's property and judgments against it; the judge has written him that it is the first time that he has fallen behind in years.
667	Terms made by Haas for renting a place for 1887
678	To M. Lazarro, Ville Platte, Dec. 23, 1886
692	Dec. 28, 1886—learns that there are Creoles (horses) in the Prairie.
700, 702	Writes Nashville, Tenn., inquiring as to the price of two "Jacks"
712	Dec. 30, 1886—describes where an old rice farmer's land is trying to be taken on a legal technicality.
716	Letter of introduction for his former bookkeeper of 11 years, John D. Currie
728	91 bales of cotton shipped to Washington, Jan. 1887.
729	Mentions that he is 18 miles away from a telegraph office.
737	Order of hunting shells, etc.
738	Orders tax receipt for various local persons.
740	To J. Massie Martin, New Orleans, Jan. 11, 1887—concerning the Farmers' Convention to meet in Lake Charles and will support Martin's recommendation.
743	Writes Judge Baillio saying V. & A. Meyer & Co. in New Orleans would have been happy to make the loan
745	Writes G. Katz, Treasurer, N. O., and lists the names of 5 donors and the amounts given to the Jewish Widows and Orphans' Home
751	Posts bond for the Johnson brothers who were arrested for trespassing on U. S. timber land; thinks them innocent.
756-757	Gives advice to a school teacher at Godwin's Mill, La.; states that Piney Woods people are poor but honest.
767	Writes concerning the payment of taxes for a number of people in his area.

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
774	Writes and lists other contributions to the Widows and Orphans' Association by the doctors Hawkins and Haas (different names from p. 745)
776	Writes his sister in Germany and sends her relief
780	Sends a gypsy mule and horse to a buyer
789	Writes debtor that he will take stock in lieu of cash on a debt
790	Returns tax receipts where an overcharge has been made; lists 15 names; states that poll taxes have been charged to two women and asks tax assessor to correct same
791	Defends the Johnson brothers against trespassing
803	Has paid court costs in a "dirty" little lawsuit
809	Writes his son, Dr. John A., at Chataignier, La.
809	Writes that William Prescott wishes to sell his 1,700 acre plantation.
814	Orders riding equipment from New Orleans and lists items needed
813-815	Orders cloth and articles of women's apparel
836	Sends commission as a road overseer from the Police Jury
848	Orders a "jack" from Nashville, Tenn.
861	Purchases hardware, ammunition, etc.
864	Pays the licenses for 5 men in his area (to the courthouse)
866	To S. L. Compton, Oakland Plantation, Bayou Boeuf, trying to sell mules and horses
872	In answer to an inquiry states that Louis Oliff in his region makes bricks
874	Writes Y. Vidrine, Ville Platte, President of the Ville Platte Tournament and Railroad Club, saying that he is glad he is on the committee and will try to get subscriptions
877	To Bertrand Weil, Alexandria, although some friends have received their invitations to the ball, he has not.
887	Mar. 4, 1887—ships 86 hides to New Orleans via Washington

<u>Page # of Letter</u>	<u>Contents of letter</u>
899	To Thomas H. Lewis—refuting the statement that court hasn't met in the last six months; discusses illness of official
908	Offers to sell mule and horse
914	To H. & A. Kahn, Evergreen, La., Mar. 12, 1887—writes that he would not condone violence and bulldozing against them, even if it meant death; glad entire community did not condone it.
915	Writes to Felix Bouar, Cottonport, La., a similar letter as the one above concerning bulldozing.
918	Asks friend in New Orleans to check with the <i>Times Democrat</i> office to ascertain the best cost available for advertising in the newspaper and printing circulars; wants the Texas and Pacific Railroad to make a branch to Ville Platte
929	At next Police Jury meeting, promises to present a motion for money for a bridge (near Cheneyville)
932	Mar. 1887—to John D. Currie, Ville Platte, expressing surprise that Old Tatum and Conway want to nominate someone against Haas; promises to protect Currie even if they try to bulldoze him as was done in Evergreen and Cottonport.
934	Shipped 36 dry skins to New Orleans
938	To M. Lazarro, Ville Platte, Mar. 19, 1887—sends his commission for road overseer.
954	Mar. 25, 1887—writes of African American man arrested in Avoyelles for horse stealing and suspects that he is also guilty of the murder of Young.
960-961	Two letters. One to Auburn, Ky., asks about buying horses and “jacks;” one to Nashville, Tennessee, concerning prices for jacks.
974, 987	Letters to J. A. Erwin, Science Hill, La., from Haas answering charge made to Erwin that Haas (as Postmaster?) has read his mail.
984	Writes that he has received the wine cask
997	Last page of the volume

CROSS REFERENCES

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Jewish merchants--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Letter book kept by a Jewish businessman from Bayou Chicot, Louisiana, containing correspondence with other Jewish firms, including V. & A. Meyer & Co. of New Orleans, and others. (For names represented see the index in the front of the volume.)
Jews--Louisiana--Charities.	1886-1887	Contributions from residents in St. Landry Parish for the Jewish Widows and Orphans Home, New Orleans, and toward the rebuilding of a synagogue in Ingville (?), Germany, pages 81, 745, 774.
Saint Landry Parish (La.)--History--19th century.	1886-1887	Correspondence from a Bayou Chicot businessman concerning residents, crops, politics, and social conditions in that part of St. Landry Parish which became Acadia Parish later. Description written to W. W. Cooper of Pennsylvania of the St. Landry country containing details on its physical features and its people, p. 149; description of the "Piney Woods," pp. 318, 326 (1886).
Acadia Parish (La.)--History--19th century.	1886-1887	Correspondence from a Bayou Chicot businessman concerning residents, crops, politics, and social conditions in that part of St. Landry Parish which became Acadia Parish later. Two letters discussing the movement to form a new parish out of St. Landry Parish and the eventual formation of Acadia Parish, pp. 391, 470 (1886).
Cattle trade--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Letters describing the collecting of cattle from the Piney Woods and their marketing and sale of hides.
Horse trading--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Correspondence concerning the buying and selling of Creole horses, ponies, and mares, mules, and jack asses; also, letters to dealers in New Orleans, Nashville, Kentucky, and Texas regarding horses and mules; order of riding apparatus, p. 817.
Floods--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Details on the flood covering Bayou Cocodrie, Elm Bayou, Black Lake, Bayou Boeuf, and Little Crocodile Lake area in June of 1886, pp. 174-218, and requesting state aid for the flood victims, p. 220.

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Louisiana--Politics and government--1865-1950.	1886-1887	Letters written from Bayou Chicot by a businessman, police juror, and member of the parish Democratic Executive Committee, relating to matters on the ward level, voting, support of candidates and issues, the Republican Party police jury appointments, and with state officials and politicians. References to two instances of "bulldozing" in Avoyelles Parish, without any particulars, one at Evergreen, p. 914, and one at Cottonport, p. 915; promise to protect a friend if bulldozing is tried in St. Landry, p. 932 (1887).
Cotton trade--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Correspondence with factors in New Orleans regarding cotton shipped from St. Landry and Rapides Parishes
Lumber--Louisiana.	1886-1887	Letters discussing the cutting and selling of timber and occasional references to local sawmills.
Crime--Louisiana--Saint Landry Parish.	1886-1887	Letters discussing crimes committed locally, the arrest of suspects, and posting of bond for offenders, the inconvenience caused by distance of the parish seat in trying crimes, and other matters.
Fishing--Louisiana.	1886	Account of excellent fishing grounds at Belle Cheney Springs and one trip which resulted in over 400 perch.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u> <u>Location</u>	<u>Reel</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
Mss.MF:H	1	Samuel Haas Letterpress Copybook April 15, 1886 -- April 1, 1887