

We have heretofore assumed that he did not remove to Windsor until he bought this ground, January 24, 1644-5, and now the question comes up, Where did he live in Windsor more than four years before settling on this spot?

I have had occasion of late to give much study to the location of the first settlers in Windsor. There is uncertainty about the occupants of two houses in 1640. One was the house of Mr. John St. Nicholas, in this neighborhood, and the other the Plymouth House, neither of which appear to have been occupied by their owners at that date. I have a theory yet to be proved, that William Hayden may have occupied the Plymouth House before Matthew Allen removed from Hartford to Windsor, and that the first Connecticut-born Hayden was born in the first house built in Connecticut.

Under date of Jan. 24, 1644 [1645], the record tells us that William Hayden bought of Francis Stiles twenty-five and one-half acres of land, and we meet to-day on that lot. Here the prime of his days were spent, and here his children grew up to take their places with the first-born sons of Connecticut, in maintaining and carrying forward the institutions planted by their fathers. To this home of our common ancestor we bid you welcome to-day.

William Hayden found this spot, 240 years ago, covered with huge forest-trees, hoary with age. Scattered around lay the trunks of trees which had grown old and died, some had fallen with the last winter's blasts; others lay prone along the earth or half buried in it, and others still had almost "returned to the dust as it was," leaving little more than a train of moss and decayed wood to show where they fell. The hand of civilization had never laid this forest low. Beyond lay the same trackless forest, save here and there an Indian trail, except the settlement at Springfield, nearly twenty miles away. To this spot, with its 240 years of culture and its changes, we welcome you. We welcome you to the broad meadow lying between us and the river. Nowhere did the English settle along the Connecticut, except where the open meadow invited to immediate cultivation. We welcome you who come from afar, to meet us who have remained near the old homestead, to do honor to our common ancestor, and set apart a