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The Journal of Charles Rawn  
October 1 to 22, 1851 (Book 22)

Edited by Tom Sheeler

### **Introduction**

Charles Rawn was a man of routine. His daily comings and goings did not necessarily run like clock work, but he did repeat activities. Aside from doing business and legal work, Rawn took notice of the weather. A weather report heads each entry in his journal. Aside from the weather, Rawn recorded information regarding the nearly daily walks that he took. He liked to walk several miles at a time, sometimes en route to a business or appointment. Rawn generally ended a day by retiring at 9 p.m., although infrequently he would stay up later.

Rawn appears to have had an ample leisure time, judging from the journal sample in question. In addition to taking walks, he enjoyed carriage rides with his family. These rides lasted about two to five miles and sometimes had specific destinations. Another of Rawn's favorite pastimes was hunting game with his sons. He was meticulous about recording the number of animals shot. On six occasions in this month, he shot twenty-four or twenty-five partridges, one rabbit, three squirrels, and one killdeer. A particularly intriguing incident occurred on October 2, when Rawn apparently shot four times at the squirrel, leaving it "dead in a nest." Perhaps Rawn's goal was not dinner or trophies.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Although Rawn does not specifically name the locations, his hunting sites tend to correspond with hotels, so a census or directory would probably yield the actual locations. Charles C. Rawn, Journal entries for 1, 2, 4, 16, 17 Oct., 1851, Rawn Journal, Charles Rawn Collection box 1, Dauphin County Historical Society, Harrisburg, PA.

Another aspect of Rawn's routine, and that of his family, was church on Sunday. Rawn belonged to the Presbyterian Church, based upon an entry dated October 21, in which he paid his pew rental.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he and his family did not always attend their own church. On the night of October 12, his wife attended the German Reformed Church, and on October 12, Rawn reports, "No church at ours – I was at Lutheran Ch. in evening [.] Rev. [?] Porter preached."

The bulk of information that comes from Charles Rawn's journal is a record of daily business. Rawn meticulously recorded expenses and income on a daily basis. He logged his personal accounts almost daily. He noted money paid out for service; he regularly paid Betsey Jackson for washing. Mostly these paid out transactions consisted of daily use items, such as foodstuffs and home commodities like lamp oil. He noted payment from a black man, Edmund Thompson, for services rendered. Unfortunately, Rawn did not note what services he offered Thompson, but Rawn was a known defender of African Americans. Other entries note payment by renters of property owned by Rawn.<sup>3</sup> He also noted transactions that occurred under his legal authority. For example, on October 1, a Mr. Kneply and Thomas Trimble signed papers regarding a real estate venture.

Rawn recorded his legal business, but with varying amounts of detail. As stated, he oversaw the Kneply/Trimble transaction and mentioned rendering service to Edmund Thompson. On October 7, Rawn noted that he was in trial, *Samuel Muller v. Geoffrey Urban and Jacob Riley*, but states little else. Also, he writes that he received money from

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<sup>2</sup> "Pd. A. Burnett [?] My Pew Rent for 6 mos. to pd. inst. For 2/3 of a Pew in the Presbyterian Church of this place, \$6.67," Rawn, Oct. 21.

<sup>3</sup> For Thompson transaction, see Rawn, Oct. 3; for renters, see Rawn, Oct. 4, 17.

the prothonotary concerning an appeal.<sup>4</sup> Some passing references to a Judge McKinney as well as Rawn writing out paperwork after a home sale also exist in the sample month.<sup>5</sup>

The most complete account of legal business appears in a three-day series of entries. Rawn collected money for W.G. Nilliston and Company, Philadelphia. On October 20, Rawn collected a sum of \$322.12 from a Mr. Croft for the company, and then Rawn deposited the sum in the Dauphin Deposit Bank. Two days later, Rawn sent the sum, minus a \$19.07 holding fee, to W.G. Nilliston and Company. Interestingly, he reportedly answered a letter from the Philadelphia company asking Rawn for an “explanation.” Rawn did not specify what the company wanted him to explain.<sup>6</sup>

A final intriguing aspect of Rawn’s journal for the sample month is the man’s writing style. His pattern of writing is erratic at best. A salient mark of the journal is Rawn’s method of underlining important information. Generally, header dates and monetary values receive double underlines while numbers and people receive single underlines. But no rules bind Rawn in his use of language. His grammar is quite faulty, and he writes mostly using abbreviations. Rarely is a person noted by both first and last names, and in some cases it is difficult to distinguish whether Rawn is discussing a deposition book or the Dauphin Deposit Bank.<sup>7</sup> Aside from the frequent and confounding use of abbreviations, each of Rawn’s entries is littered with random capitalization and almost non-existent use of punctuation. Although these realities would normally create enough problems for readers, Rawn also tends to write in run-on sentences. In the

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<sup>4</sup> The names Bulsbaugh, Mohler, and Frazer are listed as parties to the lawsuit, but it is unclear who was defendant and plaintiff. Rawn, Oct. 11.

<sup>5</sup> See Rawn, Oct. 16: “attended Millers Sale at Lander’s Hotel after 7 to 8 ½ P.M. and wrote [?] on agreement of Purchase for Geo. Boyer and C.O. Zimmerman to [?] – He sold to them & farmhouse to ~”

<sup>6</sup> Rawn, Oct. 20-Oct.22

<sup>7</sup> Rawn, Oct. 2, 21; Note that in the former entry, very little detail was provided for what Rawn meant. It was not until reading the latter entry that the abbreviations had clear meaning.

October 11 entry, Rawn writes, "I at the same time paid him \$3.00 on account of \$.600 agreed to be given him for any interest he may have on the fare of the [?] in the assignment on the Mill's property to us as for fees." Despite its difficulties, however, Rawn's journal is a telling specimen of 19<sup>th</sup> century life.

### **The Journal**

October 1,4 Clear & fine – fresh- Pleasant – Pd. Bestsey Jackson (Yesterday) 12 ½ in full for Zoning. Pd. Mr. Butler 30 ~ 3 ½ lbs. Beefs 25 ~ Amt. 17 ½ ~ Paid 2 Bu. Potatoes \$1.20 ~ Amt. \$1.87 ½ ~ Thos. R. Trimble at office – Attended to business with him and Mr. Knepley & wrote Bonds from Knepley to him – he deld. Deed to Sd. K. & we entered judts – K pd. him \$9.60 expenses for [?] trip here about Sd. Business they pd me FEE \$7.50 in full for writing Deed & Bonds. Called with Mr. T. to see Mrs. T at Buehlers Hotel – walked with them to Pollacks & Wyeths Book store. Mrs T. to buy Episl. Prayer Book for her son Thomas in Erie [?] Where they are going & for which they [?] at 12 (noon). Mrs. T. called few Ms. to see Mrs R in afternoon son Chas. J Calvin, self & C.M. Shell with Dog & guns rode to Jonah Oflerbys where put our horse in stable and gunned hard by his house – shooting 8 partridges & 1 rabbit home by 5 ½ P.M. Spent Ev. Home to bed 9 PM.

2 – 5 Clear & fine – Pleasant. Wrote to Paul Graff. [?]on Bush Matter – also to James Bredin Esq., Butler PA in reply to his letters of recd. 15 Aug. 19 Sept. last. Depd. in D.Dep. Bk \$25.00. Pd. 20 ct. 12m Postage in advance from Telegraph. Wife Fanny Self rode in carriage from 2 to 5 P.M. I took gun along & we had considerable of a time after

a large gray squirrel. I shot 4 times and I believe left him dead in a nest [?] at Herr's Hotel at 7 P.M. few ms. leading news – home – to bed 9 P.M.

3 – 6 Clear & fine – fresh – Pleasant – Recd. of Edmd. Thompson Cold. Man FEE \$6.00 for my profl. services in relation to the [?] Cold. Man. Vy Wet Walked through day [?] for 3 hrs. Ev. home Cheifly to bed 9.

4 – 7 Clear & Cloudy – Some windy – fresh- coldish in afternoon Paid for 7 lbs. Butter \$1.05 ~ Beefs 30 – Powder & Shot- 15 12 lbs. burning fluid 18 ¾ - [?] 15 ~ 3 Bus. Oats \$1.00 Amt. \$2.83 ¾ ~ [?] 6 inst 5 = \$2.88 ¾. Received of Mr Hopkins for Miller [?] \$4.50 on a/c rent. And of Amos Millhouse for Mi[?] \$4.50 rent. Sons J. Calvin Chas. & self let in our Carriage for Neidig's at 9 AM to taking gun along – shot 4 or 5 partridges through day – dined at Neidigs & remained to their [?] till 3 P.M. then we left for home where we got about 4 ½ P.M. Ev home to bed 9

5 – 1 Clear & Cloudy – wife & children at Ch. In Morning I was there in Ev. in Lecture Room because no fire in Ch. – after I came home wife & self went over to her sisters (Beatty's) to see Mrs. Geo. Beatty. Home 8 ¾ to bed 9

6 – 2 Clear & fine ~ Pleasant. Wife & daughters Fanny & Mary rode in carriage from 2 to 5 P.M. taking gun along and I shot wild pigeon and Killdeer ~ I spent Ev. Cheifly home home to bed 9. Wife at Mrs. Gilberts from 6 ¾ to 9 ½ P.M.

7-3 Clear & fine – Pleasant – I was engaged for [?] from 10 AM to 12 ½ PM. & from 1 ½ to 3 ½ P.M. in trial before [?] of Case of Saml. Muller v. Geof. Urban & Jacob Riley No 21 Nov 7. 51 Paid Betsey Jackson parking & zoning 37 ½ Yesterday & today Paid (Yesy.) 5lbs Crackers 25, Sugar 6 ¼ ~ Amt – 68 ¾ - (over)

8-4 Clear & fine – Pleasant. Recd. of Berry Hopkins on a/c rent for Miller to them \$2.00 – pd. 2lbs. Butter 31 – Beef 16 Sweet Potatoes 12 ½ ~ Cough Med. & Sundries 15 – Apples 25 Matches 6 ¼ ~ Amt. \$1.06 ~ five cts worth apples got at Bulsbaughs during carriage ride at 4 ½ P.M. with wife & Children & Will Pollack. – I walked 2 or 3 Miles about 10 ½ A.M. and rode in carriage as above from 4 to 5 ½ P.M. at Mc.Kinneys office from 7 to 8 P.M. talking with his brother Chambers McKinney – home 8 – Mrs Jno Wyeth here – walked home with her at 9 P.M. back & to bed 9 ¼

9-5 Clear & fine ~ Pleasant. Walked 3 or 4 Miles between 9 & 10 ¼ A.M. ~ Recd. load (1 load) Hickory Wood from Mrs. Elizth. Neidig per Christn. Good (farm tenant) for which she has Credit on a/c of prof. Services in My Day Book. Spent afternoon and evening Chiefly at home And to bed 9 P.M.

10-6 Clear & fine ~ Pleasant – Recd. one horse load of slabs from McAllister [?] Saw Mill, hauled by Wm. Jones' boy. Recd. letter Yesterday from Paul Graff [?] Oct. 8 in reply to Mine of 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. Wrote this day in reply Wife, Fanny & self rode in carriage between 3 & 5 P.M. for 7 Miles – Spent Ev. Chiefly at home & to bed 9 P.M.

11 – 7 Clear & Cloudy – damp in Mornng. – Paid for 26 qts. of shellbark, 60cts. – Sugar 6 = 66 ~ pd. Geo. L. Emerson Esq. for Bouviers Law Dictionary (two vols) \$4.00 in full what he asked for it. He said it cost him \$6 or \$7 of Capt. Partridge who he thought paid \$10 for it. I at same time paid him \$3.00 on a/c of \$6.00 agreed to be given him for Any interest he might have on the fare of the [?] in the assignment of the Mills property to us as for fees. He claimed nothing in said property and his name was inserted against his remonstrances that he did not expect the like [?] ~ Recd. of [Prothy?] Miller in Bulsbaugh [?] Mohler [?] Frazer 57 or 58 Jany. 1 51 \$2.75 of debts [?] of costs paid us on appeal. Excepted to & struck out this day agreement between McCormick & self. Sons Chas., J. Calvin & self rode in carriage at 2 P.M. to Henry Sights – where we put our horse in Stable & gunned [?]. Got chestnuts& [?] near 5 P.M. then home Spent Ev. Cheifly home to bed 9.

12 – 1 Cloudy – damp. Mild. Wife and children at our Church in Morning and wife at Ger. Refd. Ch. in Evng. – I spent day at home – walked 3 Miles circular about 5 to 5 ¾ P.M. and was at M. McKinneys from 7 ½ to 8 ½ P.M. home & to bed 9 P.M.

13 – 2 Heavy Rain in last night – Some little today – warm, Mr. Wright – of [Jonestown?] Called at office, [?] also Abm. [McNeal?] & a Mr. Weaver about claim for Wages of latter against Harrisburg [?] Co. Walked between 2 ½ & 4 P.M. about 4 Miles was at Mr McKinneys office from 7 to 8 P.M. ~ home to bed 9 ¾ P.M.

14 – 3 Clear & very fine – Pleasant. Some windy about 11AM. Fine day for election and a very [?] one. Walked through day 3 or 4 miles. Paid Betsey Jackson 25 for washing today pd 12 lbs. burning fluid 18 ¾ ~ Sugar 6 ¼ = Amt 50 cts. was at judge McKinney's office a few Minutes about 7 ½ PM. in Courthouse few Ms. – home and to bed at 9 ½ P.M.

Oct. 15 – 4 Clear & fine – fresh & Cool. Pd. For 6 Bus. Potatoes \$3.29 for Beef 28, Rolls 6 = Amt-\$3.63 ~ Recd. Letter from W.G. Nilliston [?] & Co. Phila. 16 Oct. & Wrote in reply at 8 P.M. having called on Croft in Morning ~ Walked through day but Chiefly about 4 ½ P.M. 4 or

16 – 5 Clear & fine – Pleasant. G.A. Miller of Lancaster at office about houses to be sold this Ev. [?] of Jas. Trimble's Estate, Son Chas. & Self rode in carriage to Peter Brenners about 4 Ms. – took gun and shot Squirrel, Red Squirrel 12 partridges – sent [?] at 2 ½ and home 5 P.M. I attended Millers Sale at Lander's Hotel after 7 to 8 ½ P.M. and wrote [?] on agreement of Purschcase for Geo. Boyer and C.O. Zimmerman to [?] – He sold to them & framehouse to ~ home 8 ½ to bed 9 PM

17 – 6 Clear & fine ~ Pleasant. G.W. Miller [?] at office And took Copies from My book of rent apts. Wife daughter Fanny & self rode in carriage between 3 & 4 ½ P.M. took gun along and I shot Partridge We had Mrs. Beatty's child wives nieces with us ½ an hour or so ~ Was at Herrs Hotel after tea from 7 to 8 PM. Reading Newspapers [?] – home & to bed 9P.M.

18-7 Clear & fine in Morning – Cloudy in afternoon – Pd. lb. Butter 46 ~ 5  $\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. Beef 35, 5 lbs. Crackers 28 (1 [?] at Meunch's) ~ Paid Mr Sheesley (Rayzors place) for a four horse load fine large whole corncobs about 90 Bushels he says \$1.37  $\frac{1}{2}$  9v. 29 Mch. Last load of Slacken[?]0 ~ Pd. For 3 Bus. Oats \$1.00 = Amt.- 43.43  $\frac{1}{2}$  ~ Powder & shot  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. each 18  $\frac{3}{4}$  = \$3.62 ~ Spent day chiefly at home and about Prothy's Office. Pd. Horse lotion & Armia [?] blossoms 35cts. at Eysters = Amt. \$3.97 – at Herrs Hotel  $\frac{1}{4}$  and hour or more about 7  $\frac{1}{2}$  P.M. reading papers – home & to bed 9 PM.

19-1 Rain in last night & Rain through day – all spent day at home – No Church at ours – I was at Lutheran Ch. in evening Rev. [?] Porter preached ~ home 8 and to bed 9  $\frac{1}{4}$  P.M.

20-2 Clear & fine, Pleasant. Spent forenoon Chiefly in office – Rode in carriage from 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 P.M. Mrs. Wm. P. Beatty my wifes sisters their child, and two of my Children [?] J. Calvin & Fanny along. Paid Betsey Jackson 25 in full for Washing today – Pd. 12 lbs. fluid 18  $\frac{3}{4}$  - Amt. 43  $\frac{3}{4}$  . Recd. of [?] Croft for my clients – W.G. Nilliston [?] & Co. \$322.12  $\frac{1}{2}$  & deld. to him his original note to sd. WGN & Co. and also that of himself & B. Parke as security for sd. Original (v. Ante 13<sup>th</sup> Ult.) and wrote to W.G. Nilliston & Co. Phila. Informing them of Sd. payment. Kept Copy & Pd. [?] 3. Was at Herr's Hotel  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour about 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  P.M. reading papers – home ~ to bed 9 PM.

21-3 Clear & Cloudy & Clear. Pleasant. Depd. In Dau Dep Bk. \$322.12 the money recd. of Mr. Croft last Eveng. Pd. A. Burnett [?] My Pew Rent for 6 mos. to pd. inst. For

2/3 of a Pew in the Presbyterian Church of this place \$6.67 (v. Rbook). Walked through day 3 to 5miles ~ Eveng. Cheifly at home & to bed PM.

22 - 4 Clear & Cloudy ~ Pleasant ~ Pd. Beef & [?] 33. Turnips 6 ¼ - 1 Bus. Potatoes 6 2/3 [?]. This makes about 9 ½ Bus. I have Now on hand viz. 8 in Box in cellar & 1 ½ in smoke house & paid last evg. Pd. Coopering barrel 25 = Amt 1.26 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> = Pd. W.G.

Nilliston & Co. for their draft of yesterdays date to [?] of Hg. Bank [?] on Dau Dep Bank \$302.25 bal. in full of collection for them from Croft (v. 20, 21 inst.) – Retaining as FFF \$19.87 v. letter recd. From them this day for explanation –

Oct 22 - 4 Contd. ~ Walked 3 miles at 11AM. Son Chas & self went in a carriage to H Sights at 2 ½ P.M. taking our guns – returned home at 5 ½ P.M. Evg. Home to bed 9.

### **Names Mentioned**

Beatty, Mrs. George, and child

Beatty, Mrs. William P.

Boyer, George

Bredin, James, Esq. – Butler, PA

Brenner, Peter

Burnett, A.

Butler, Mr.

Croft, Mr.

Emerson, Geo. L., Esq.

Fanny – wife; attended German Reformed church

Gilbert, Mrs. – Rawn's wife visits

Graff, Paul

Hopkins, Barry – rec'd rent

Jackson, Betsey – did washing and ironing

Jones, Wm.

Knepley, Mr.

McCormick

McKinney, Chambers – brother of Mordecai McKinney

McKinney, Mordecai Judge – Rawn visits his often several times

Miller, G. A.

Miller, G. W.

Millhouse, Amos

Muller, Samuel v. Geof Urban and Jacob Riley – case

Neidig's

Neidig, Mrs. Elizth.

Nilliston, W. G. & Co. – client

Oflerbys, Jonah

Parke, B.

Partridge, Capt.

Pollack, Will

Pollocks & Wyeths book store

Porter, Rev. – preached at Lutheran church

Rawn, J. Calvin – son

Rawn, Chas. – son

Rawn, Mary – daughter

Shell, C. M.

Sheesley, Mr.

Sights, Henry

Thompson, Edmd.

Trimble, James R.

Trimble, Thomas R.

Weaver, Mr.

Wyeth, Mrs. Jno.

Zimmerman, C. O.