

MR. AND MRS. GAY HAYDEN.—Prominent among the many pioneers of the Pacific Northwest who deserve an enduring place in its history are Mr. and Mrs. Hayden of Vancouver, Washington, whose heroism under the many difficulties that beset the emigrants who broke the way for advancing civilization on this far frontier will seem to generations yet unborn, who are destined to read these pages, more like the dream of the novelist than a recital of facts.

Mrs. Mary J. Hayden, who at this writing is a handsome, well-preserved and charmingly vivacious woman, as ready-witted, graceful and gentle as though border life had never been her portion, was born in the year 1830 in Athens, Maine, and spent her early childhood with her grandparents in the town of Cornville in that state. At the age of fifteen Miss Bean emigrated with her parents to the wilds of Wisconsin, where she was married in 1847 to Gay Hayden, one of the well-known pioneers of the Pacific Northwest, with whom her lot was cast; and, in the year 1850, they emigrated to that part of Oregon Territory to be known in future as the State of Washington.

In recounting her experiences in crossing the plains with teams of oxen, Mrs. Hayden says: "We traveled leisurely at first, but wearily, as the roads were bad in early spring, and accommodation for ourselves and teams could be had at night in the spare settlements, through which we thought it safer not to hurry. But, when we launched out in the open prairie beyond the settlements, we enjoyed a sense of freedom and exhilaration born of inexperience and the exuberance of young, untried ambition. At Council Bluffs we remained in camp for about ten days, waiting for the tardy grass to grow sufficiently to sustain our stock. Here we occupied the time in enlarging tents, mending ox-yokes and repairing wagons. We also provided supplies for the long, long journey, and effected an organization of one hundred people for our mutual protection."

On about the 20th of May the little party took up their line of march up the north side of Platte river, where they soon found good roads and abundant forage, and with perpetual sunshine during the day and terrific thunder-storms at night. During one of these storms the cattle stampeded, leaving them stranded for ten days without teams. They were compelled to abandon half of their stock, which was left behind to be picked up by more fortunate travelers. Their wagons were broken by the teams upsetting them; and there was no timber to be procured for repairs except by swimming to an

island in the Platte, where they obtained green cottonwood poles to replace seasoned hickory tongues and axles, with which they moved uncertainly on.

After reaching the sandhills of the Platte, they made slow progress with their depleted teams. At Fort Laramie they purchased more oxen, paying enormous prices. Here they entered the Flint or Black Hills, where their oxen became so tender-footed that many were unfit for use. The Pawnee Indians, through whose country they laboriously traveled, annoyed them greatly, but offered no bodily harm. The uneventful and yet exciting days sped on until at last they reached Fort Hall. After leaving this fort, the party met for several days an almost continuous band of Indian braves, many of whom were very insolent. They demanded food, blankets, etc.; and at one time Mrs. Hayden was seized by two of them and partially drawn from the wagon in their search for powder, which they were frantically determined to get hold of. But for the timely action of Mr. Barker, Mrs. Hayden's uncle, who was driving the team and who promptly rescued the lady, there would doubtless have been a terrible tragedy.

One pleasant afternoon, as they were nearing Salmon Falls on the Snake river, a young Indian came bounding out of the hills, and was suspiciously cordial in his greetings. Walking up to Mr. Hayden, he put his arm around him. Not wishing to be outdone in cordiality, Mr. Hayden returned the compliment; and the two (the white man unsuspecting and the Indian on the alert) walked and talked together as best they could by signs and gestures, when suddenly the Indian turned around and, pointing to the wagon, asked in Chinook, "*Konsi chick chick, chareo, okoke sun men a loose?*" (How many wagons are going this way before the sun goes down?)

Mrs. Hayden divined the Indian's treacherous intentions, and interrupted her unsuspecting husband by promptly answering, "Twenty," holding up her extended thumbs and fingers twice to denote the number. The Indian being thus deceived as to their real situation, broke away and disappeared in the hills as suddenly as he had come; but, upon arriving at camp, the anxious party was delighted to find four or five wagons ahead of them, although the mythical twenty did not appear, nor did the Indians either.

Arriving at The Dalles, our emigrants sold their teams and the running gear of their wagon, reserving the bed, with which they constructed a boat to bring them on to Portland. At the Cascades they could not find an Indian or anyone else who would pilot them over the rapids of the Columbia; so they made the portage by hiring a government team to haul their effects, including the novel boat, around the falls, where they launched and embarked, but had to "waup" the wagon bed around several points of rocks before reaching open water. In making one of the portages on this perilous trip, Mrs. Hayden rode on the top of their clumsy boat, which had previously been perched upon a huge government wagon, her lofty, jolting, rocking eyrie carrying her far above the tops of the tall fir trees that rose in the gulch below her. In many places

the grade was a narrow, sidelong, slippery wagon track, which the faithful mules trod with human sagacity, as they stuck their plinth hoofs among the rocks that guarded the mountain side. After all the danger was over, and the teamster had time to think, he grew nervous and made Mrs. Hayden, who was in poor condition for walking, dismount and make her way afoot over a long stretch of safe and level road, saying he "couldn't control the team." At Cape Horn the dauntless party rounded the cliffs in their wagon-bed boat, although men experienced in navigating the Columbia succumbed to a violent windstorm that was raging and tied up their staunch whale-boats till the passing gale had spent its fury.

After many adventures, our emigrants safely reached St. Johns on the Willamette with their boat and camping outfit, but soon returned to Vancouver, where they were entertained for six weeks by Mr. A. M. Brown, a sturdy pioneer, who with his good wife gave the jaded travelers a hospitable welcome. Here Mrs. Hayden became the proud mother of twins, whose exultant crowings brought added joy to the family's lodge in the wilderness. It was a whole year after the Donation land act became a law of Congress before the welcome news reached these dauntless people of the border; but they were on the ground ready to take advantage of the law when the tidings came. And Hayden's Island near Vancouver soon became their home. They lived there for five years, embracing all the trying period of the Yakima war, during which Mrs. Hayden spent many weeks alone in the forest with her children, her husband being often away on business, and menacing Indians always within sight.

During all this trying time, Mrs. Hayden went well armed. She became an expert shot through daily practice with her rifle, judiciously exercising her firearms always within sight and hearing of the Indian villagers, being herself the only white woman in the neighborhood who lived outside of forts or stockades, with the exception of Mrs. James Bybee, whose home was three miles distant. But there was one family living on the Lackamas which deserves notice. This was at a point about sixteen miles from Fort Vancouver. The family consisted of a wife and eight or nine children, the husband and head of all this domestic felicity, who owned a valuable horse, having prudently placed himself and horse under the protection of the government guards at the fort.

After the close of the Indian war, the Haydens removed from their Donation claim of six hundred and forty acres to the town of Vancouver, Washington Territory, where they have ever since resided in the beautiful home they have wrested from the wilderness.

At the breaking out of the Rebellion, the few ladies who resided at Vancouver formed a very successful sanitary society, in which Mrs. Hayden took a leading part. The survivors of this society, which had contributed to the sanitary fund with phenomenal liberality, formed themselves into a dinner club at the close of the Rebellion, which originally consisted of seventeen members. This club has ever since met annually at the home of some one of their

number; and all are pledged to meet thus as long as any of them shall remain upon the earth. At this writing the club numbers but eight, the other nine having been called away by the vicissitudes of life and death. At each annual meeting the question as to who shall be left at last to dine alone becomes more and more a serious matter for consideration, as their depleted ranks gather around some hospitable board to talk of "Auld Lang Syne."

Mrs. Hayden has imbibed the true spirit of American independence in her years of pioneering, and is an active woman suffragist. During the period when the women of Washington enjoyed the elective franchise undisturbed by the treachery of politicians, Mrs. Hayden served acceptably to herself and the public as a grand juror. She regards the disfranchisement of the women of Washington as an act of unwarrantable jurisdiction over the inalienable rights of the dauntless heroines who risked their lives to defend their homes as pioneers, of which future generations will be ashamed, and asserts that she will never be able to sympathize to any great extent with the disfranchised negro element of the South until the white women of the Pacific Northwest are again placed in the political category as their equals at least, and thereby raised above insane persons, criminals, idiots, Chinamen and Indians not taxed, with whom the carpet-bag judges of the South have recently rated them.