



EMIGRANT TRAILS HALL OF FAME

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Minnie Hayden Howard

Biography

- Born 1872, Memphis, Missouri
- Died 1965, Pocatello, Idaho
- Married: William Forrest Howard
- Physician, trail historian, author, civic leader

Achievements

- One of a few women practicing medicine in the West in the early 1900s
- Leader in the movement to preserve the Oregon Trail and Fort Hall
- Served as Bannock County Historian 1931-1956
- Listed as one of twenty significant women in Idaho history by Idaho Women's Commission
- Howard Mountain named in honor of Dr. Howard and her husband

Minnie Howard, born Minnie Frances Hayden, began her career as a school teacher in Kansas. After her marriage to William Forrest Howard in 1894 the couple entered medical school together. They received their degrees in 1899 and practiced together in Cuba, Kansas until 1902 when they moved to Pocatello, Idaho. They helped establish Pocatello General Hospital in 1907. She quit practicing in 1908 and devoted her time to family, civic and historical activities. She obtained a grant from Andrew Carnegie to help establish the Pocatello Carnegie Library in 1908.

She became interested in the history of the old Fort Hall after Ezra Meeker's trek across the Oregon Trail brought him through Pocatello in 1907. She became devoted to his cause and a leader in the Fort Hall Memorial Association that was later established. She wrote extensively about the history of Fort Hall.

Dr. Howard was also active in the Nathaniel Wyeth Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution, was a Regional Director of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association and a leader in a number of other historical and civic organizations.

In 1916 Dr. Howard and her husband were in the group with Ezra Meeker that placed the first marker at the original site of old Fort Hall. In the 1920s she worked closely with Meeker in the movement that led to the issuance of the Oregon Trail Memorial half-dollars, authorized by Congress in 1926.

Her papers are archived in the Special Collections Library at Idaho State University.