

## The Mother of Hayward

The city of Hayward is named after William Hayward. He built his hotel here around 1852 and it soon became very popular. When it came time to choose a name for the town, they named it after William Hayward and his hotel.

William Hayward's wife, Rachel Hayward, was also a very important part of the city's early history. She was so important that many people even called her the "Mother of Hayward."

Rachel Hayward was born Rachel Rhodes in Layette, Indiana in 1831. In 1848, when she was 17 years old, Rachel married a man named C.Z. Bedford in Tippecanoe County, Indiana. She and C.Z. had a daughter, named Mary, who was born in 1851.

When Rachel was about 27 years old, her husband C.Z. died. Rachel didn't know what to do. Rachel's sister, Emiline, had moved out to California a few years earlier and was living in the East Bay. So, in 1858, Rachel came out to California as well. She left her daughter Mary, who was 7 years old, with her grandparents while she went ahead to find a place to settle in California. By 1860, Rachel had found a place to live and was working as a seamstress (someone who sews and makes clothes) in San Lorenzo. She sent for her daughter to come live with her.

By 1866, Rachel's daughter Mary had joined her mother in California. One day, they took a stagecoach ride from San Lorenzo down to the little town of Hayward. Rachel's sister Emiline had just bought a house on B Street in Hayward. Emiline had four children of her own, and Mary was probably excited to see all of her cousins! However, with so many children, Emiline did not have room for her sister and niece in their new house. So Rachel and Mary got a room at the Hayward's Hotel.

The hotel was the main attraction in town. It sat at the top of the hill on the corner of A Street and Main Street. At the time of Rachel's arrival, Hayward was still a growing town. There were only a few businesses and houses in downtown Hayward. Less than 1000 people lived in the entire town.



*Rachel Hayward, c. 1900*

Rachel met William Hayward at the hotel, and they became friends. They began to spend more and more time together. Eventually, in April 1866, William and Rachel were married at her sister's home. Several months later, Rachel gave birth to a son, William Martin, who was born March 1867.



*Hayward's Hotel c. 1920. The hotel, which started as a modest structure was expanded and remodeled numerous times under Rachel's watch.*

William Hayward had many different business interests in the small but growing town. While he was busy with other things, Rachel basically became the manager of Hayward's Hotel. Most of the major changes and additions to the hotel happened while she was in charge. Hotel guests and Hayward residents thought of her as the best and most important hostess in town. The hotel became known for nice rooms, good food, and the grand celebrations held at the hotel. Rachel was considered a great cook and everyone liked her food!

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, all the most important social events in town were held at Hayward's Hotel. Rachel knew everyone in the area and they all knew and respected her.

In July 1891, William Hayward died. His will stated that all his possessions should be sold, including the hotel. All the money from the sale went to his two children, Louisa and William, with the largest percentage going to Rachel. This amounted to well over \$100,000 total.

By 1900, Rachel retired and went to live with her daughter Mary and her family in Oakland. But she eventually returned to Hayward and lived at the hotel. She died there in 1917 at age 86. Her funeral was one of the largest held in town. Town officials, businessmen, and friends all attended and were part of the procession from Eden Congregational Church to her final resting place beside her husband at Lone Tree Cemetery.

*Anniversary party for George and Emma Oakes. Rachel Hayward, a good friend of Emma's, stands in a place of honor in the center of the photo, 1901*



As the announcement of her death in the newspaper stated, “because of her loving care she became known as the honored **Mother of Hayward.**”