

MRS. ELLEN M. H. PECK
Author—Mrs. Marcia B. Ferguson
Milwaukee

Mrs. Ellen M. H. Peck was born about 1838 in Windsor, Vermont. When three years of age her father moved to Palmyra, Wisconsin. There she spent her girlhood and at seventeen went to Milwaukee to attend the Female Seminary (now Milwaukee Downer College) under Miss Mary Mortimer, who was then the President. Her marriage to James Sidney Peck June 29, 1870 of Milwaukee followed her graduation. The wedding being performed in Palmyra. Mrs. Peck always took a prominent part in religious, educational and social work in the city. For many years a communicant of St. Pauls Episcopal church, she was active in church and benevolent work and did a great deal for young men coming to Milwaukee as strangers.

She, with the help of Julia Ward Howe and others, started the first woman's club in Milwaukee, October 9, 1876. Later the same club was formed into the first Woman's Stock Companies in the country, building the Athenaeum in which the Woman's Club have always held their meetings. Mrs. Peck held the Presidency in both organizations. In 1892 Mrs. Peck was appointed State Regent for Wisconsin by the National Board D. A. R.

Though she entered the field with great enthusiasm, the work lagged at first, it being almost impossible to induce people to take the trouble to look up their claims, but she worked heroically—wrote hundreds of letters, and though defeat stared her in the face—the word “fail”

was not in Mrs. Peck's vocabulary and she finally succeeded in getting members enough in Milwaukee to form a Chapter which was organized February 14, 1893. She gave to the state ten years of bountiful service. She was a member of the Mayflower descendents and founded the Society and was its first Governor. Also a charter member of the Colonial Dames in Wisconsin. She founded the Consumers League in Wisconsin with the help of Mrs. Nathan of New York and was instrumental in securing Saturday's afternoon closing for the department stores in summer.

She was an active member of the Mission Band, a Charitable organization. She was instrumental in starting Mrs. Sheldon's History Class—was secretary and treasurer of the Industrial School for girls at different times. Was made chairman of the Biannual of Womans Clubs held in Milwaukee. Wrote without dictation 2500 letters and personally raised \$2,000.00 from business men for that Convention. Three trips to Europe gave her a glimpse of other countries, and during the last, she wrote and published a book called "Travels in the Far East."

With her incessant public duties, entertainments were frequent, and an open house for all friends. She was extraordinarily business like—had a wonderful memory and no one ever appealed to her in vain.

On July 17, 1909, Ellen M. Hayes Peck passed on, alone and instantly.

Her kind and generous disposition making her universally beloved and being tactful to an unusual degree, every organization to which she belonged felt that it had met with an irreparable loss.



MRS. EDWARD, MARCIA B. FERGUSON
Historian of the Milwaukee Chapter for many years.

