

## 4A/ EDITORIAL

### Grand Forks Herald

#### NORTH DAKOTA CHARACTERS

Fort Union National Historic Site, located southwest of Williston on the Missouri River, attracted a diverse group of adventures.

One of these explorers was Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden, a budding naturalist, geologist and paleontologist. Hayden came to the Fort Union area in the 1850s to study the rocks and fossils in what he called the "Great Lignite Basin."

Hayden studied this area on his own limited resources, and with the help of the management at Fort Union, which provided him with a place to work from, supplies, and passage on their steamboats. After having attracted some attention for his natural expertise, Hayden was hired by Lieutenant G.K. Warren of the Army Corps of Topographic Engineers to be the geologist for the exploration of the upper Missouri and lower Yellowstone Rivers.

With the geological and paleontological insight of his East Coast associate, Fielding Bradford Meek, Hayden published a series of articles about the Fort Union region in the Proceedings of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences. These papers set down the foundation of basic geological and paleontological knowledge for future research in the western territories.

When Hayden and Meek first published on the geology and fossils of the Fort Union area, they were at the beginning of their professional careers. Hayden would become the head of one of the largest post-Civil War geological and geographical surveys exploring the West. Meek, who collaborated with Hayden and many other geologists through the territorial survey years, became the foremost paleontologist of his time.



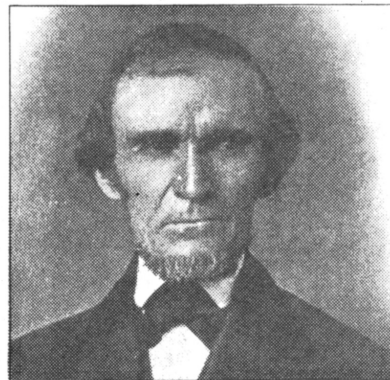
*Joseph Hartman, paleontologist and geologist, at the UND Energy & Mineral Research Center, submitted the text, biographical information and the photographs for this article. His nomination and research are most appreciated.*



## Ferdinand Hayden

**Pioneer  
geologist**

**Born: Sept. 7, 1829**  
Westfield, Mass.  
**Died: Dec. 22, 1887**  
Philadelphia



## Fielding Meek

**Pioneer  
geologist**

**Born: Dec. 10, 1817**  
Madison, Ind.  
**Died: Dec. 21, 1876**  
Washington, D.C.