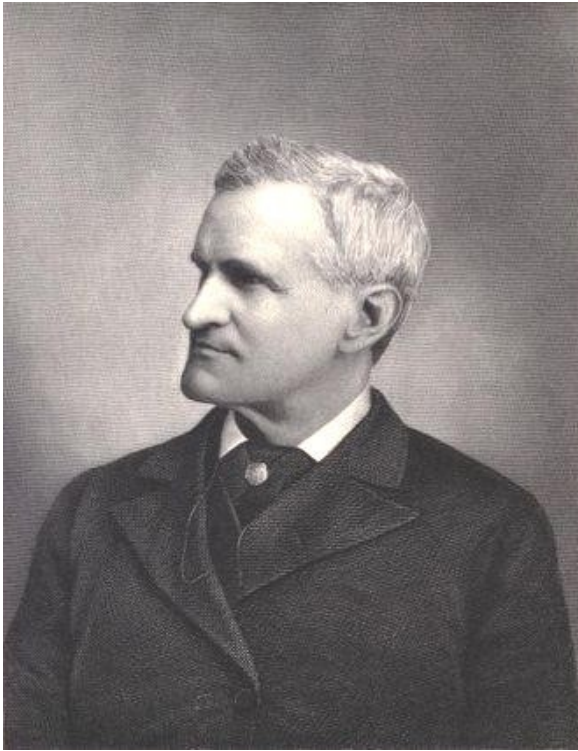




EMIGRANT TRAILS HALL OF FAME

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION



Biography

- Born: 1823, Boston, Massachusetts
- Died: 1893, Boston, Massachusetts
- Married: Catherine Scollay Bigelow
- Historian, author, horticulturist

Achievements

- Prominent 19th century historian whose best-known works included *The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life* and a seven-volume series, *France and England in North America*.
- President of the Massachusetts Historical Society.
- Professor of Horticulture at Harvard University.
- A founder of the Archaeological Institute of America.

Francis Parkman

Francis Parkman, a renowned 19th century historian, was born into a prominent family in Boston, Massachusetts and was a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. He developed a passionate interest in forests and the wilderness as a young child. After his graduation from law school in 1846 he embarked upon an expedition to the West to pursue his interest in native Americans and learn more about the westward migration.

He traveled on the Oregon Trail from Westport to Fort Laramie. He spent some of his time on the five-month trip living, traveling and hunting with a band of Oglala Sioux. On his return trip he first headed south, visiting The Pueblo and Bent's Fort in what is now Colorado. He had kept extensive notes during his expedition and his recollections were first published in 1847 in a series of articles in *The Knickerbocker Magazine*.

In 1849 they were published in a book whose original title was *The California and Oregon Trail*. The title was misleading since he had not traveled on the trail as far as California. Parkman is said to have regretted the "publisher's trick" of including California in the title to increase sales. Later editions of the book were published under the title *The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life*. The book appeared at a time of increasing interest among Americans in learning more about the West, providing a revealing first-hand account of conditions along the trail and Parkman's experiences with the Sioux. It became a classic that was widely acclaimed over the years.

Although Parkman suffered from poor health a good deal of his life, he was the author of other major works, including *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada* (2 vols.) (1851) and *France and England in North America*, a seven-volume series published between 1865 and 1892, covering the colonial period from its beginning until 1763.

Parkman also achieved prominence as a horticulturist and was appointed Professor of Horticulture at the Bussey Institution, a biological institute at Harvard, in 1871. He served as President of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and as Vice President of the Massachusetts Historical Society. His home on Beacon Hill in Boston, which he built in 1865, is now a National Historic Landmark.

President Theodore Roosevelt dedicated his four-volume history of the frontier, *The Winning of the West*, to Parkman.