



EMIGRANT TRAILS HALL OF FAME

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Dale Lowell Morgan



Biography

- Born 1914, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Died 1971, Accokeek, Maryland
- Historian, author, editor

Achievements

- Widely acclaimed for works related to the history of Utah, the exploration and settlement of the American West, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Native Americans and mountain men.
- Recipient of two John Simon Guggenheim Fellowships in United States History

Dale Lowell Morgan was a renowned historian of the American West. As a result of meningitis, he lost his hearing at age 14. Although it was a devastating setback, he overcame the obstacles to communication that it presented and developed remarkable research and writing skills that enhanced his career as an historian and the renown he achieved.

During his career, his meticulous research was generously shared with fellow historians. His works were widely lauded, and his influence was felt by prominent historians over the years, including Fawn Brodie, Juanita Brooks, Wallace Stegner, Harold Schindler, Will Bagley, and many others.

Morgan received a degree in art from the University of Utah in 1937. After his graduation, he began his career in positions connected with history and writing projects sponsored by the Federal Writers Project.

In 1940 he was named state supervisor of the Utah Historical Records Survey. He prepared the *WPA Guide to Utah*, published in 1941, followed by histories of Ogden and Provo. In 1942 he accepted a position with the Office of Price Administration in Washington, D.C.

Morgan's early research and writing focused on the Great Basin and the history of the Latter-day Saints in Utah. His first major book, *The Humboldt: Highroad of the West*, was published in 1943 as part of the Farrar & Rinehart *Rivers of America* series. *The Great Salt Lake*, published in 1947 as part of *The American Lake Series* of Bobbs-Merrill Company, was a comprehensive history of Utah widely acclaimed for the depth of its research.

Other major works included *West from Fort Bridger: The Pioneering of Immigrant Trails Across Utah, 1846-1850*, with J. Roderic Korns, (1951); *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (1953); *Overland in 1846: Diaries and Letters of the California-Oregon Trail* (2 vols. 1963); and *The West of William H. Ashley* (1964).

Morgan was the recipient of two John Simon Guggenheim Fellowships in United States History, in 1945 and 1970. From 1954 until his death in 1971 he was an historian at the University of California Bancroft Library.

In 1978, *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930*, an extensive compilation of sources on which he had worked beginning in the 1940s, was published with an introduction written by him prior to his death.

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