

PONY EXPRESS SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY CONTEST

Out of the five superintendents that Russell, Waddell, and Majors chose, I found Howard Egan to be the most inspiring and influential man. Major Howard Egan was a true pioneer of the West and an essential component to the Pony Express. He helped the trail to flourish and expand. Egan was the superintendent of the Mormon division of the Pony Express and not only supervised the route from Salt Lake City, Utah to Roberts Creek, Nevada, but was an experienced rider on the trail as well. In fact, Egan was the first Pony Express rider to deliver mail to Salt Lake City.

Egan grew up on the Eastern coast and learned to sail at a young age. When he was thirteen years of age, he was orphaned and left without parents. He moved to Salem, Massachusetts where he met and married Tamson Parshley. They joined the Mormon Church and moved with a group to Illinois. It was here that Howard Egan received the title "Major Howard Egan." He became involved with the city police force and was appointed major of the local armed forces. Led by Brigham Young, Egan moved west to Utah with a band of Mormons.

Being the great outdoorsman that he was, Howard Egan explored and established over 300 miles of the Pony Express trail. He set up several relay stations, acted as a guide and scout, and owned and operated many businesses west of Salt Lake City. Because he was so familiar with the territory, Egan was appointed as the superintendent of the Mormon division of the Pony Express.

Unlike other superintendents, Egan really cared for the success of the trail. He went to the trouble of finding the best horses and the best men for the job. He would accept nothing else. Egan hand selected his riders, who usually belonged to his Mormon

church. Egan cared for these men that rode for the Pony Express routes. On one occasion, he demanded extra attention for a rider that no one else seemed to think would live. Egan didn't give up on this man and sent for a doctor. After two weeks, the rider was well and delivering mail once again. If not for Howard Egan, that rider would have died.

Egan was a very strong leader and an important part of westward expansion. He greatly contributed to the Pony Express as a division superintendent and mail carrier. Major Howard Egan passed away in 1878 at the age of sixty-three.

Bibliography

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