

The Wild West

Background Information

Louisiana Purchase - Purchased from France (1803)

Texas Annexation – Annexed by Congress (1845)

Oregon Territory - Agreement with Great Britain (1846)

Mexican Cession – Mexican War (1848)

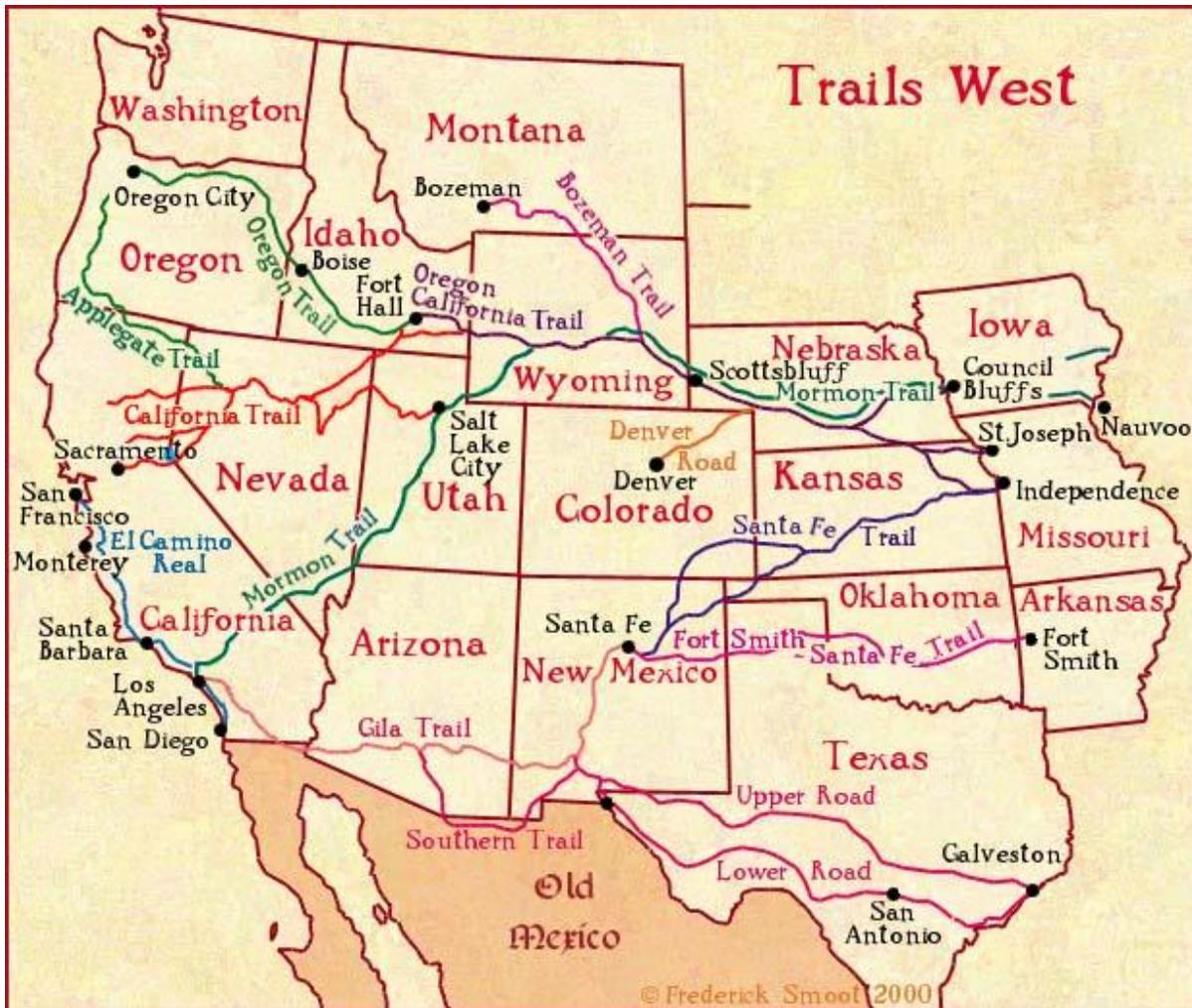


Manifest Destiny

The belief that it was “God’s Plan” for the United States to expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Arctic Ocean to Gulf of Mexico

Mining

- mining would lead to the settlements of California, Nevada, Montana, Idaho, South Dakota & Alaska
- **California Gold Rush of 1849**
 - “49ers” or miners who moved to California to find gold in 1849.
- **Comstock Lode** – the largest discovery of precious metals in North America.



Cattle Drives



CATTLE TRAILS

- increased demand for beef in the eastern cities
- cattle drives started in Texas → Kansas and Missouri
- cattle drives end in the 1880's with the settlement of the Great Plains, and the invention of barbed wire.

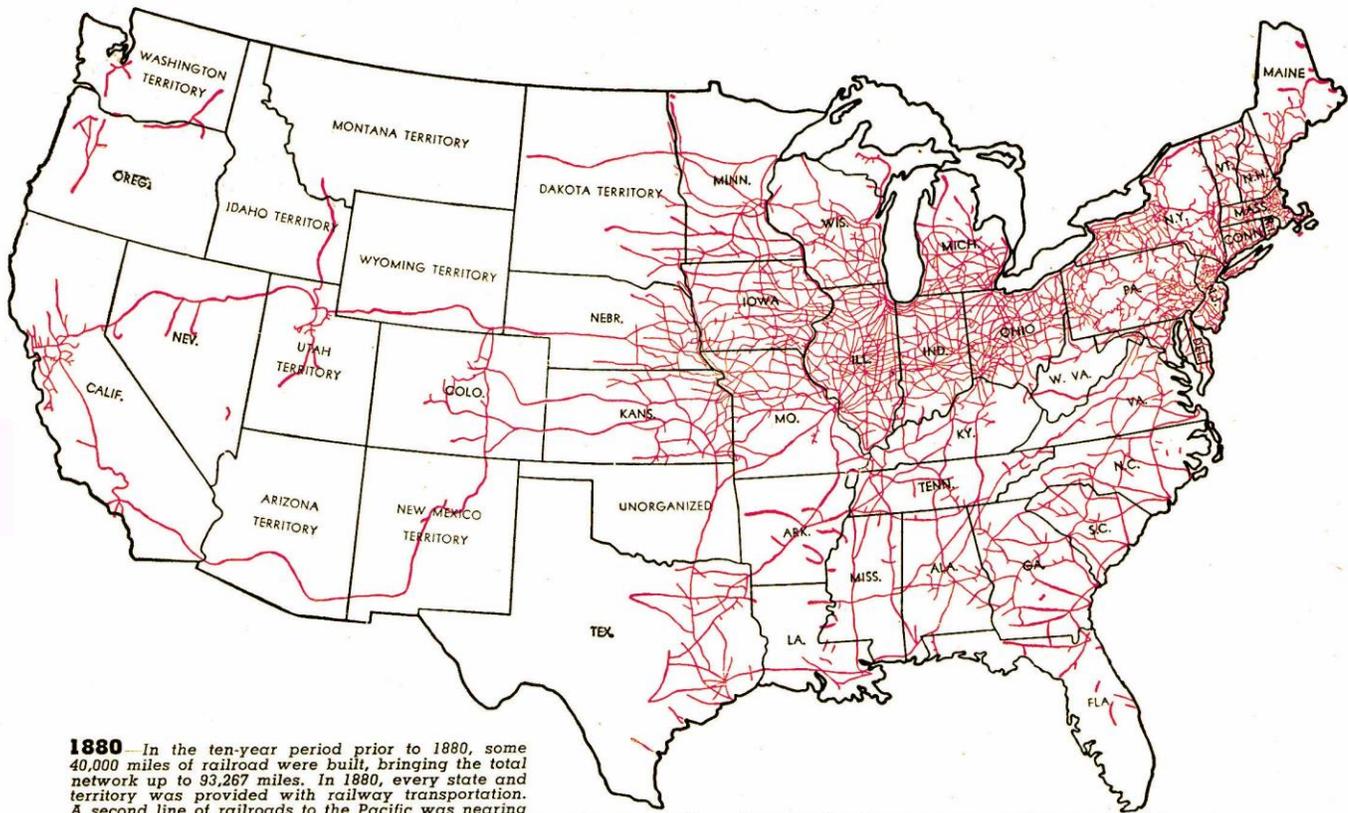


Railroads

- people could now move from coast to coast faster, safer and cheaper.

Transcontinental Railroad

- **Union Pacific** – started in Omaha, NB and built over the Great Plains. Used Irish immigrants
- **Central Pacific** – started in Sacramento, CA and built over the Rocky Mountains. Used Chinese immigrants
- The two would meet at Promontory Point, UT and used a golden spike to connect the two lines.



1880—In the ten-year period prior to 1880, some 40,000 miles of railroad were built, bringing the total network up to 93,267 miles. In 1880, every state and territory was provided with railway transportation. A second line of railroads to the Pacific was nearing completion, and other transcontinental railroads were under construction. Railway development was exerting a powerful influence upon immigration and agricultural and industrial growth throughout the country.

Farmland

- **Homestead Act of 1862**

- 160 free acres to anyone who stayed on the land for 5 years
- only 20% went to small farmers 80% went to the railroads and large land speculators

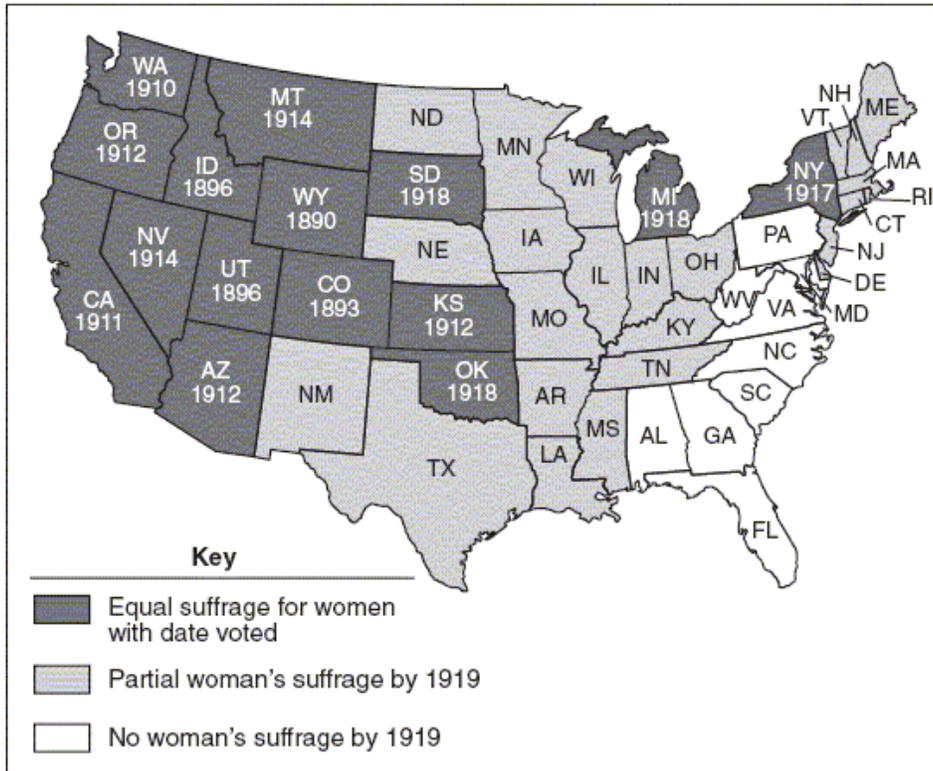
- **Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889**

- last major land rush in America
- **“Boomers”** people who went to Oklahoma to get land
- **“Sooners”** people who snuck in the night before



Role of Women on the Plains

Woman's Suffrage Before Ratification of the 19th Amendment, 1920



Source: Sandra Opdycke, *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Women in America*, Routledge, 2000 (adapted)

Women would gain political and legal equality in the West first, due to their importance on the frontier.



Exodusters

16

All Colored People

THAT WANT TO

GO TO KANSAS,

On September 5th, 1877,

Can do so for \$5.00

IMMIGRATION.

WHEREAS, We, the colored people of Lexington, Ky., knowing that there is an abundance of choice lands now belonging to the Government, have assembled ourselves together for the purpose of locating on said lands. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we do now organize ourselves into a Colony, as follows:— Any person wishing to become a member of this Colony can do so by paying the sum of one dollar (\$1.00), and this money is to be paid by the first of September, 1877, in installments of twenty-five cents at a time, or otherwise as may be desired.

RESOLVED, That this Colony has agreed to consolidate itself with the Nicodemus Towns, Solomon Valley, Graham County, Kansas, and can only do so by entering the vacant lands now in their midst, which costs \$5.00.

RESOLVED, That this Colony shall consist of seven officers—President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees. President—M. M. Bell; Vice-President—Isaac Talbott; Secretary—W. J. Niles; Treasurer—Daniel Clarke; Trustees—Jerry Lee, William Jones, and Abner Webster.

RESOLVED, That this Colony shall have from one to two hundred militia, more or less, as the case may require, to keep peace and order, and any member failing to pay in his dues, as aforesaid, or failing to comply with the above rules in any particular, will not be recognized or protected by the Colony.

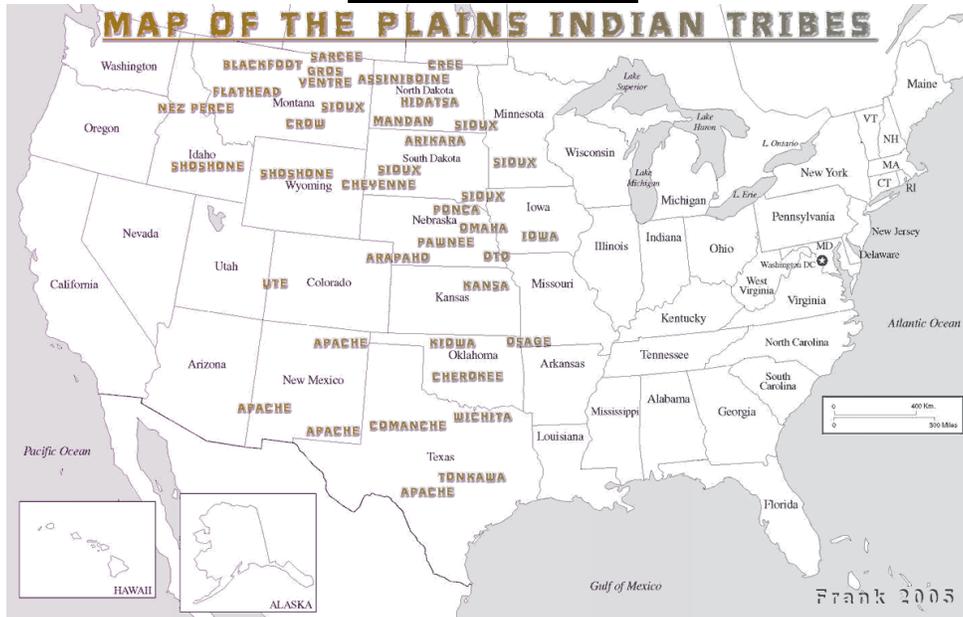
African American Homesteaders who moved west during Reconstruction to escape segregation.



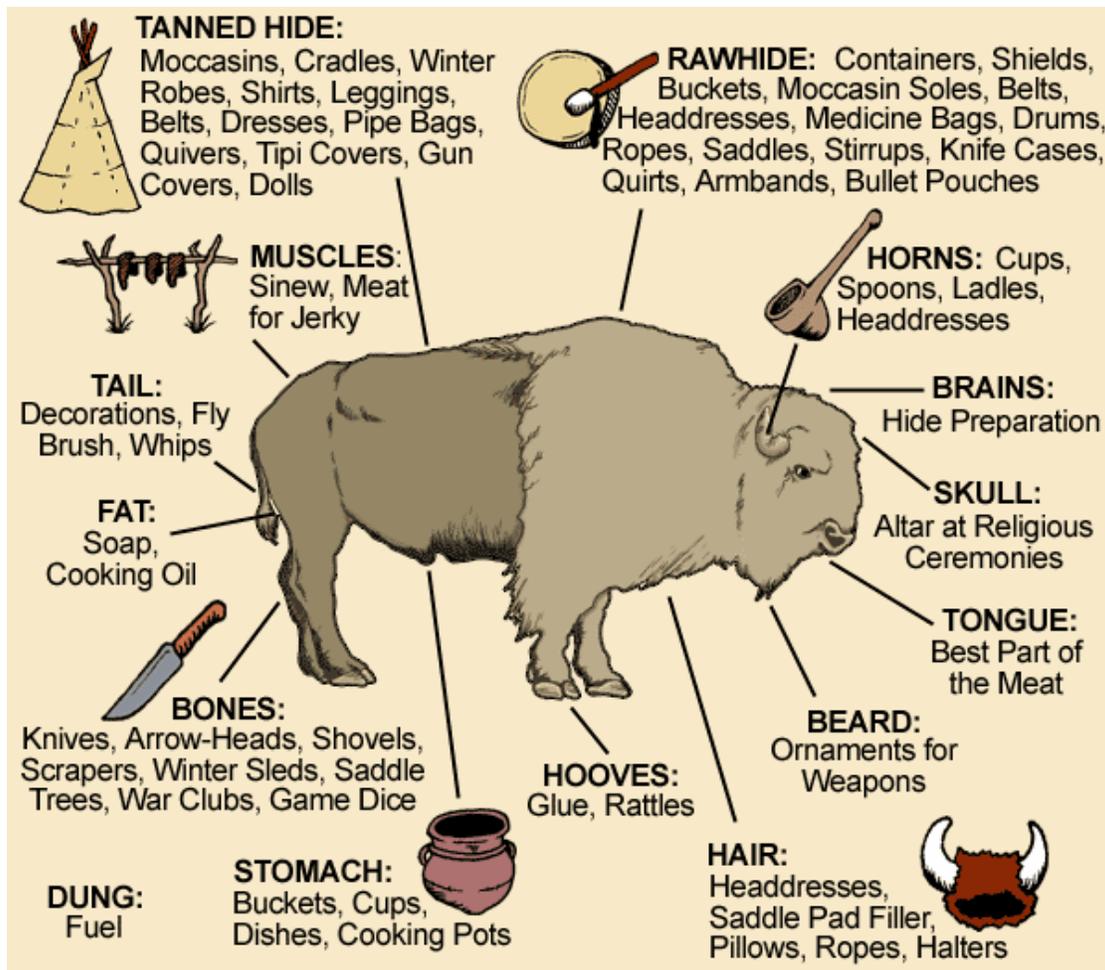
UNIT PIVOTAL QUESTION

What were the positive consequences of Westward Expansion?

Plains Indians



Plains Indians depended on the buffalo for food, clothing, shelter, weapons and tools



U.S. Policy

“The more Indians we can kill this year, the less will have to be killed in the next war, for the more I see of these Indians, the more convinced I am that they all have to be killed or maintained as species of paupers” -Gen W. T. Sherman (1868)

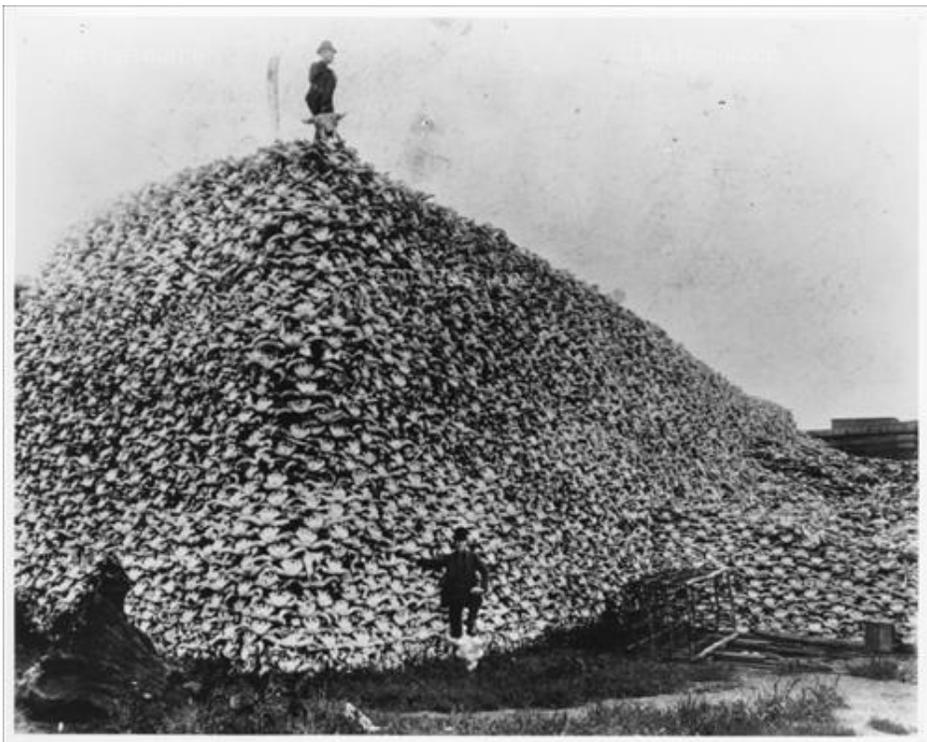
“The only good Indian is a dead Indian. Kill all, scalp all. Little and big. Knits make lice.” -Gen. Philip Sheridan (1869)

Either kill the Plains Indians or make them submit to American society, and force them on reservations.

Genocide - the intentional extermination of a race, religion or culture.

Strategy

- destroy the buffalo→destroy their way of life.



- before European settlers there were 30,000,000 buffalo on the Great Plains→by early 1900's less than 100 buffalo in North America.
- **Dawes Act** – Native Americans were forced on reservations, given land, made into farmers in an attempt to destroy their tribal life→policy failed→U.S. Gov't didn't understand Native American culture and traditions.

Native American Perspective

“We had buffalo for food, and their hides for clothing and for our tepees. We preferred hunting to a life of idleness on the reservation, where we were driven against our will. At times we did not get enough to eat and we were not allowed to leave the reservation to hunt. We preferred our own way of living. We were no expense to the government. All we wanted was peace and to be left alone. Soldiers were sent out in the winter, they destroyed our villages. The "Long Hair" [Custer] came in the same way. They say we massacred him, but he would have done the same thing to us had we not defended ourselves and fought to the last.” - Crazy Horse of the Lakota (1887)

Famous Battles

The Little Big Horn (1876) - Col. Custer and his command were destroyed by Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull; last major Indian victory.

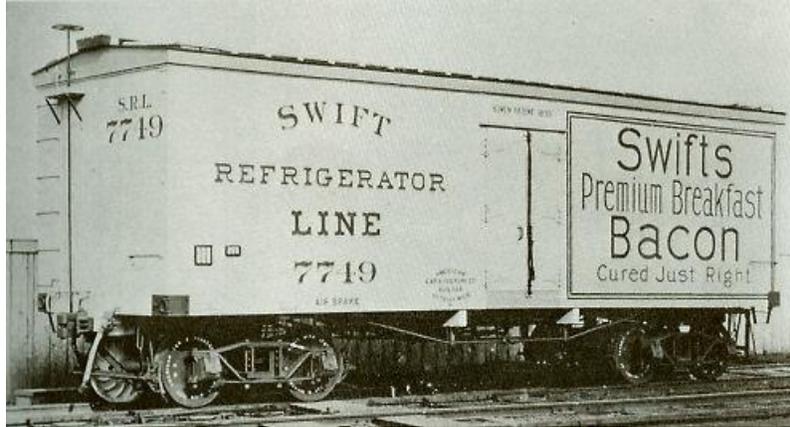
Apache Wars (1886) – Geronimo finally surrenders to mark the end of the Indian Wars.

"I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. It is cold, and we have no blankets; the little children are freezing to death. My people, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever."

-Chief Joseph of Nez Perce (1887)

End of the Wild West

- **New inventions**
 - barbed wire & refrigeration cars end the long cattle drives



- **Transcontinental Railroad**
 - increased trade and settlement of the West
- **Native American tribes are pacified**

UNIT PIVOTAL QUESTION

Compare the positive and negative consequences of Westward Expansion? Was it worth it?