

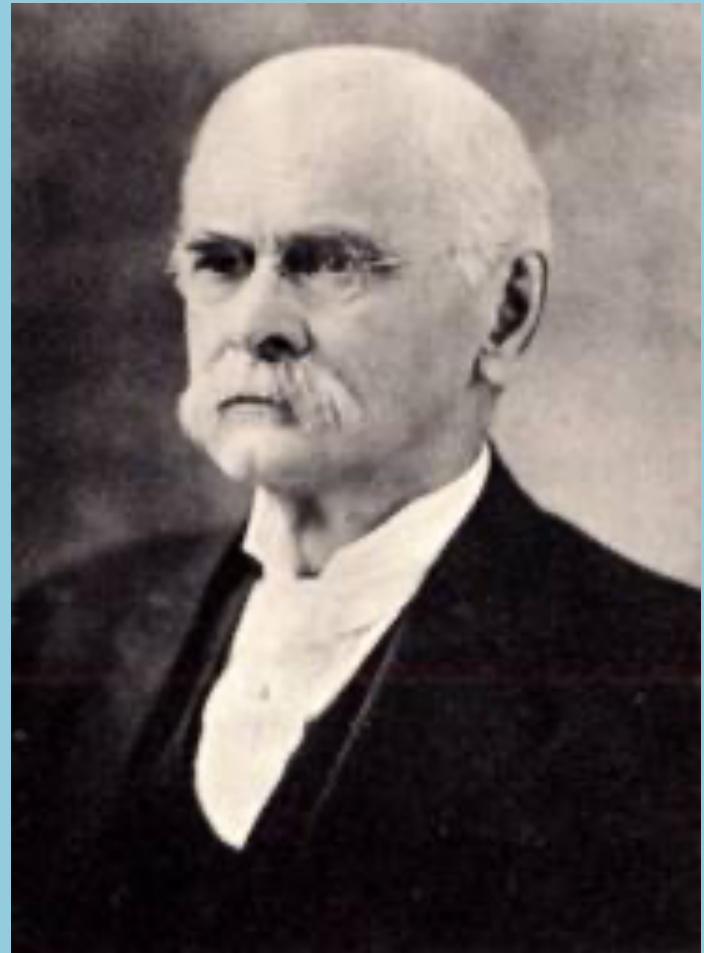
“The Frontier West”

Mining

- Many Americans were lured to the West by the chance to strike it rich mining gold and silver.
- The western mining boom had begun with the California Gold Rush of 1849.
- From California miners spread out in search of new strikes.

Comstock Lode

- 1859 – Gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada.
- Henry Comstock = “Comstock Lode”
- Unknown to its owners, Comstock Lode was even richer in another precious metal.



“danged blue stuff”

- Miners at Comstock Lode complained about the heavy blue sand that was mixed in with the gold.
- Some curious miners had the “danged blue stuff” taken to California to be tested.
- Tests showed that the sand was loaded with silver!



Boom Towns

- The Comstock Lode attracted thousands of people to the West.
- The mining camp grew into the “**boom town**” – a town that experiences sudden growth and economic success) of Virginia City, Nevada.



- Miners eventually moved into other areas such as Montana, Idaho, Colorado, and South Dakota.



“Ghost Towns”

- Towns grew up near all the major mining sites. Mines lasted only a few years, When the ore was gone, boom towns” turned into “ghost towns”:



- Other settlements lasted and grew. Denver and Colorado Springs grew up near rich gold mines.



- The surge of miners into the West created some problems:
 - Miners and towns *polluted clear mountain streams*,
 - Miners cut down *forests* to get wood for buildings, and
 - Miners forced *Native Americans* from their lands.

- A few miners
got “rich” quick
– most did not!

Railroads

- **Railroad Companies** raced to lay down track to the mines.
- The federal government encouraged railroad building in the West by **loaning money** to the railroad companies.
- However, Congress and the railroad ignored the rights of **Native Americans** living in the West.



Transcontinental Railroad

- 1863 – Two companies (the *Union* Pacific and the *Central* Pacific) began a race to build the first *transcontinental railroad* (one that stretches across the continent from coast to coast).



Transcontinental Railroad

- The Union Pacific started in Omaha, Nebraska and worked westward.
- The Central Pacific started in Sacramento, California and worked eastward.



Transcontinental Railroad

- Both companies had trouble getting workers.
- The work was backbreaking, dangerous and low paying.
- The railroad companies hired many immigrant workers from Ireland and China.



Transcontinental Railroad

May 10, 1869 – The *two rail lines met*
at *Promontory Point*, north of
Great Salt Lake, Utah.



Before long, other major rail lines linked the West and the East.

The railroads brought growth and new settlement all across the West.

Because of the rapid growth, western territories began to apply for statehood.

Statehood

Eight new states formed between 1864 and 1890:

Nevada (1864)

Colorado (1876)

North Dakota (1889)

South Dakota (1889)

Montana (1889)

Washington (1889)

Idaho (1890)

Wyoming (1890)

“Conflict with the Plains Indians”

The Great Plains

- Many different Native American nations lived on the ***Great Plains***.
- As many Americans moved west, after the Civil War, they settled on the ***Great Plains***.
- People crossing the region found that the land was good for ***farming*** and ***ranching***.



The Great Plains

- At first, the United States' government promised to protect Indian villages and hunting grounds.
- But as settlers pushed westward, the government broke their promises!



Great Plains Indians

When the Native Americans resisted the westward expansion of white settlers, *Wars* spread across the Great Plains.



Chivington Massacre

- Also known as the *Sand Creek Massacre*
- 1858 – Miners struck gold at *Pike's Peak* in Colorado.
- Federal government officials forced Indian leaders to sign a treaty giving up the land around Pike's Peak.



Chivington Massacre

- The Native Americans refused to give up their land.
- They attacked trains, burned homes, and killed miners and soldiers.



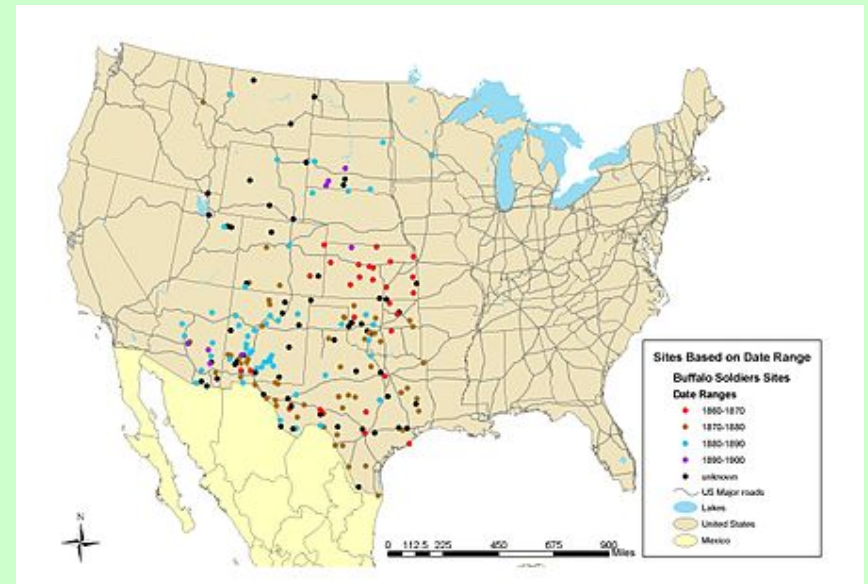
Chivington Massacre

- November 29, 1864
- Colonel John Chivington led soldiers in an attack on a village in Cheyenne, Colorado.
- When Chivington attacked, the Indians raised a white flag to show that they surrendered.



Chivington Massacre

- Colonel Chivington ignored the flag and ordered his men to destroy the village.
- In the *Chivington Massacre*, the soldiers killed **150** men, women and children – the Chivington Massacre outraged Native Americans!
- Across the Plains, soldiers and Indians went to war.



Native American Treaty

- In 1867, Native Americans living in present-day Oklahoma signed a treaty which removed them to a new **reservation** (a limited area that is set aside for Native Americans) in South Dakota.



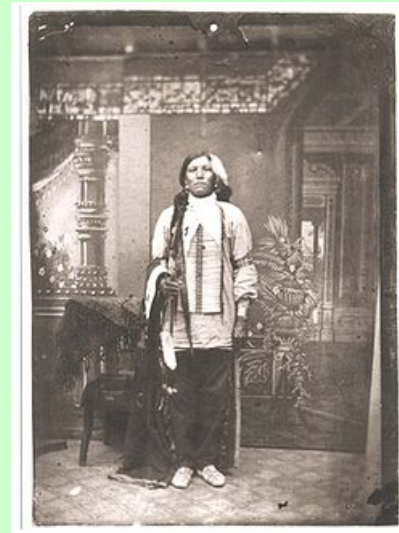
The Black Hills

- In 1874, gold was found in the Black Hills region of South Dakota.
- Thousands of miners rushed to the land that the government had set aside for Native Americans.



The Sioux War

- Led by ***Sitting Bull*** and ***Crazy Horse***, the Indians fought back in what became known at the ***Sioux War of 1876***.



Custer's Last Stand

- In June, 1876, Colonel George A. Custer led a group of soldiers into the Little Bighorn Valley (Montana).
- Although outnumbered, Custer did not wait for more soldiers.
- He attacked the Native Americans (approximately 3,000) with only 225 men.



The Battle of Little Bighorn

- During the battle, Custer and his men were trapped.
- One by one, all of the soldiers were killed.
- At the end, only Custer stood – then he was killed also.
- The entire battle lasted *less than 1 hour!*



The Battle of Little Bighorn

- The *Battle of Little Bighorn* was a victory for the *Indians*.
- However, by the winter, too many soldiers occupied the area, and the Native Americans were once again forced from their lands.



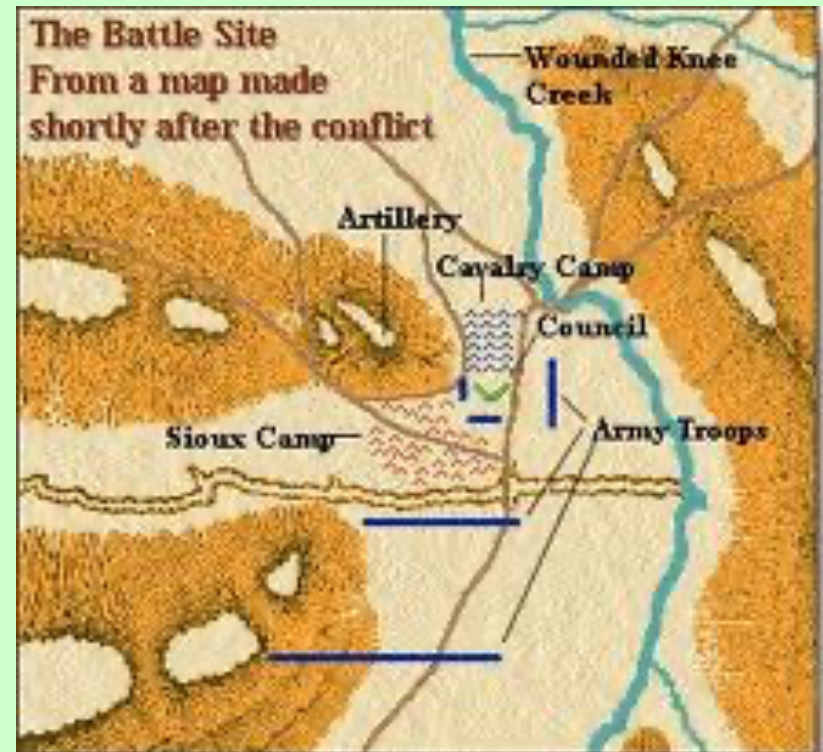
Sitting Bull

- In December 1890, police officers entered the *Standing Rock Reservation*.
- They intended to arrest *Sitting Bull*. In the struggle that followed, Sitting Bull was accidentally shot and killed.



Wounded Knee Creek

- Badly upset by Sitting Bull's death, groups of Indians fled the reservations.
- Army troops pursued the to Wounded Knee Creek, in South Dakota.



Battle at Wounded Knee Creek

- On December 29, 1890, the Indians agreed to surrender.
- Suddenly a shot rang out, and the army opened fire.
- By the time the shooting stopped, nearly 300 Native American men, women and children lay dead.
- About 30 soldiers were killed also.
- The fighting at *Wounded Knee* marked the end of the Indian wars in the Great Plains.

