

Expanding West (1820-1860)



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1. Oregon Country

In the spring of 1846 many people were on their way to the western frontier. As the nation grew many people moved west on the Oregon Trail. In doing this, the United States enlarged its borders.

I think I'm
lost on the
Oregon Trail!



Oregon Country



GEOGRAPHY Skills

Oregon Country was the first area in the far west to draw settlers from the United States.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate (a) Oregon Country, (b) British territory, (c) Willamette River, (d) South Pass.
- 2. Region** What line of latitude marked the northern boundary of Oregon Country after 1846?
- 3. Critical Thinking Drawing Inferences** Why do you think the Oregon Trail often followed the course of a river?

The Lure of Oregon

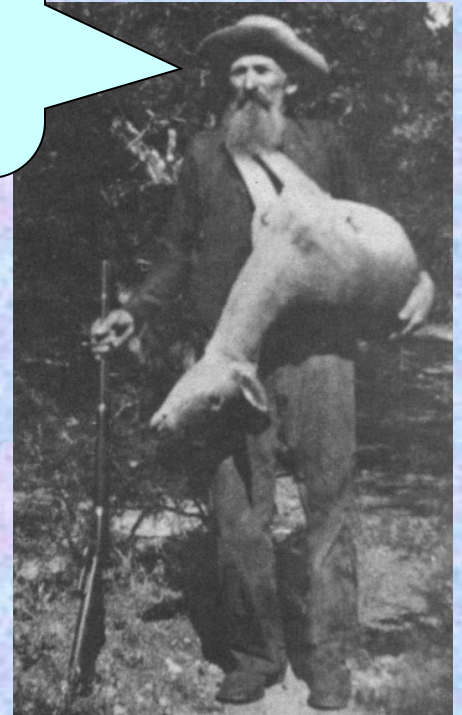
By the 1820's, families were in search of good farmland, so they headed westward. They were drawn to the lands far west. Americans went to [Oregon Country](#), a huge area beyond the Rocky Mountains. Today this land includes Oregon, Washington, Idaho and much of Wyoming. White settlers found fine farmland and good temperatures in the Oregon Country. Animal trappers flocked to the Oregon Country because for beaver and other fur bearing animals.



Competing Claims

Great Britain, Russia, Spain and the United States all claimed the land of the Oregon Country. Even though the land rightfully belonged to the Native Americans, the United States and other countries claimed the land in Oregon. In 1818, the United States and Britain agreed to occupy the land jointly.

As an early settler, I love hunting!



Fur Trappers in the Far West



In Oregon's vast forests a group of men called, Mountain Men trapped animals and lived off the land. They were viewed as **rugged individualists**, or people who followed their own independent course of life.

An American Profile



Narcissa Whitman

1808–1847

Marcus and Narcissa Whitman arrived in Oregon after a seven-month journey. In Oregon, Narcissa's life proved harsh and lonely. Marcus was often away for weeks, working among the Indians. Narcissa desperately missed her family back East. Sending or receiving letters, however, was difficult. Often she had to wait a whole year for letters to arrive from home.

Soon after reaching Oregon, Narcissa gave birth to a baby girl. Tragically, her daughter drowned at the age of two.

Why do you think Narcissa did not just give up and return home?

Their lives were filled with great danger. They lived their life trying to make their fortune in trapping beavers in the Rocky Mountain Streams. However, bears wildcats and other wild animals often attacked these fur trappers, making their life very dangerous. Mountain men lived off the land. In bad times they would eat almost anything to stay alive. In good times, they would gorge themselves with food. They learned many of their survival skills from the Native American Indians.

**Mountain
Men...
beware of
me!**



During the fall and spring, they would tend to their traps. Then in July, they would meet other traders in a place chosen the year before, called the rendezvous. This was a fun time for trappers to laugh and exchange stories. By the 1830's the fur trade was dying out because they killed too many beavers. Some Mountain Men took jobs leading settlers across the rugged trails of Oregon.

I can't wait to meet the other fur traders



Mountain Men Explore New Lands

In their search for furs, the Mountain Men show the settlers the wilderness trails of the west. At least one Mountain Man was a woman. *Marie Dorion*, an Lowan Indian, first went to Oregon with fur traders in 1811. She won fame for her survival skills.



**I will
survive!**

Narcissa Whitman

BRAVE PIONEER

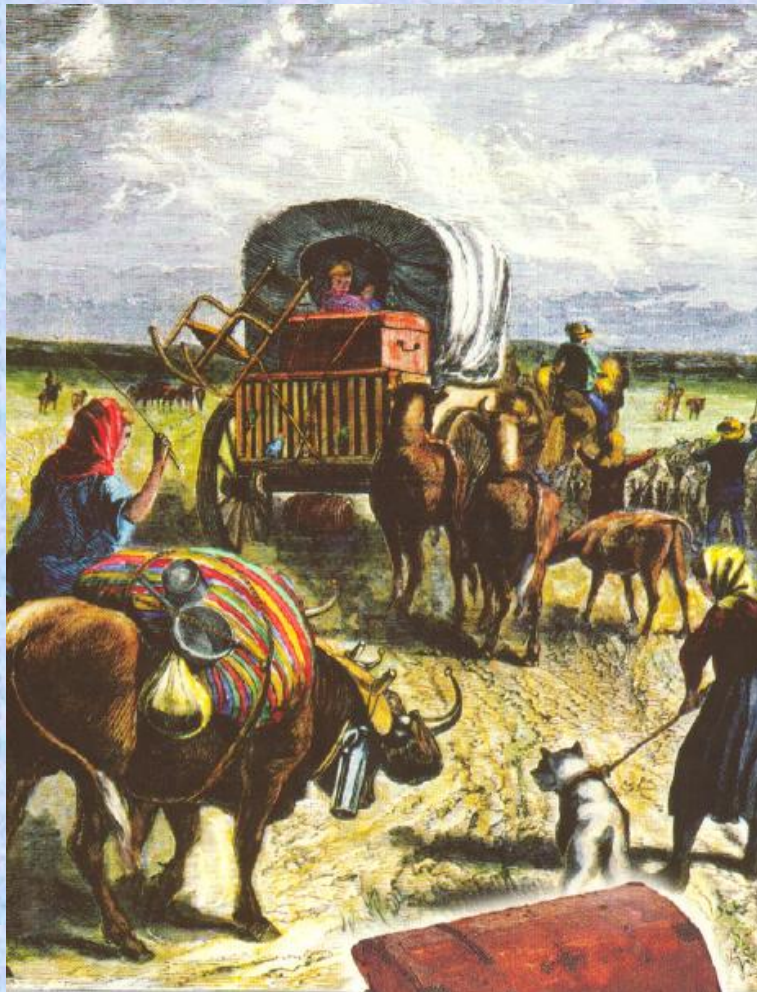


Missionaries in Oregon
The first white Americans to build homes in the Oregon country were the missionaries. Among them were Marcus and Narcissi Whitman. They built their mission near the Columbia River. Soon they took over the Indian lands for their houses and their farms.

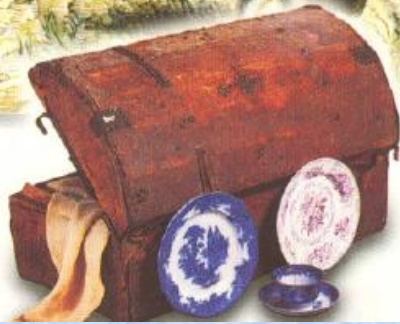
Wagon Train West

Throughout the 1840's the settlement in Oregon grew. Farmers bragged about the great crops they harvested. Word got to the east and started "Oregon Fever." Soon everyone was flocking to Oregon to start their own farm. Wagon trains left every spring for Oregon following the [Oregon Trail](#).





and turnips five feet
ce to get to Oregon.
ged the trails west.



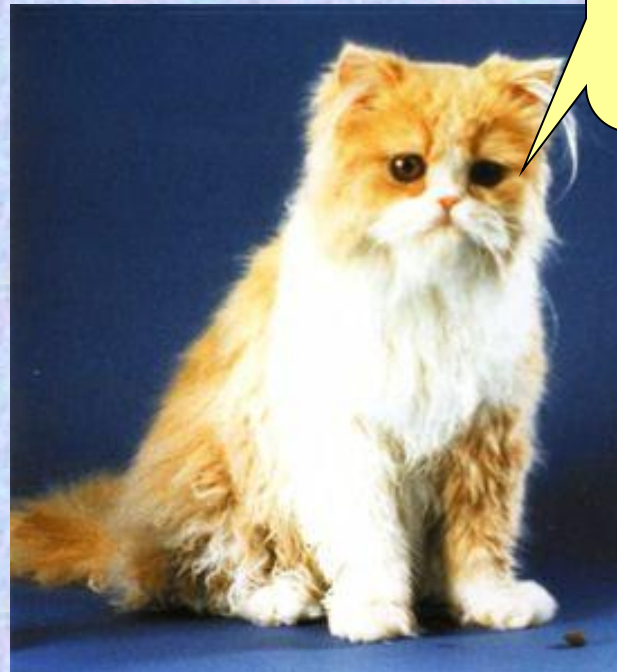
Viewing History

On the Trail



People and wagon trains crowded the trails to the West in the 1840s. Here, families struggle to drive their animals just a few miles farther before darkness. At the bottom of the picture is a trunk that one woman used to get her precious china to the West. **Making Generalizations** Based on these pictures, make a generalization about the character of the people who journeyed along the Oregon Trail.

Life on the trail was hard, most families set out with heavy gear. They traveled from dawn to about 7:00 p.m. daily. The long trek held many dangers. In the spring travelers risked their lives traveling through the heavy rains. Snow storms often blocked traveling through the mountains. The biggest threat was sickness. Cholera and other diseases could wipe out a whole wagon train. Because travelers live so close together, diseases and germs spread quickly.



**I feel
sick!**

As pioneers moved west, they often passed Native Americans. The Indians seldom attacked the whites trespassing on their land. The Native Americans often traded with the settlers. Hungry Americans were grateful for the food they the Indians sold. Despite their hardships, 50,000 people reached Oregon between the years 1840-1860. By the 1840's the American people greatly outnumbered the British people in Oregon.



2. The Republic of Texas

Americans in Mexican Texas

Since the early 1800's American farmers had looked eagerly at the vast region called Texas. At the time, Texas was part of the Spanish colony of Mexico. In 1821, Stephen Austin was given a land grant by Spain so he was able to set up a colony.

Texas



Hooray
for Steve
Austin!



Meanwhile Mexico won their independence from Spain. The Mexicans allowed Stephen Austin and the settlers to stay because they believed they would help fight off Indian attacks. Soon afterwards, the Mexicans gave the American colonist land if they agreed to become Mexican citizens and Catholics. Soon 20,000 Americans moved to Texas. They had the support of many **Tejanos**, or people of Mexican descent born in Texas.



Independence for Texas



GEOGRAPHY Skills

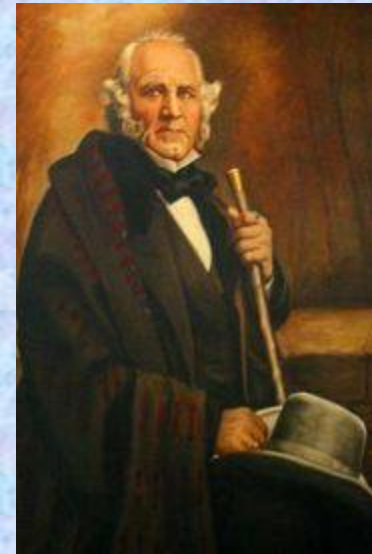
After a brief but bloody war, Texas gained its independence from Mexico.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate (a) Rio Grande, (b) Nueces River, (c) Gonzales, (d) San Antonio, (e) the Alamo, (f) Goliad, (g) San Jacinto.
- 2. Movement** (a) Where did Santa Anna's army first fight the Texans? (b) Describe the movement of Mexican and Texan forces after the Alamo.
- 3. Critical Thinking Comparing** Refer to the political map of the United States in the Reference Section. How do the boundaries of the Republic of Texas compare with the boundaries of Texas today?

Conflicts soon erupted because most of the settlers were Protestants and they did not speak the Mexican language. In addition, the Mexicans feared that the United States wanted to make Texas part of their country. This led to fighting between the Texans and Mexicans. The Mexican leader, [Santa Anna](#) was a [dictator](#). A dictator is a ruler with absolute power and authority. Santa Anna was determined to rid Texas of the Americans. Many Texans fled. Fewer than 200 Texans were held up in an old Spanish mission called the [Alamo](#). At the final [siege](#) at the Alamo 183 Texans and almost 1,500 Mexicans died. The five Texan survivors, including Davy Crocket, were executed at Santa Anna's orders. The men of the United States rushed to aid [Sam Houston](#) and the American Army. On April 21, 1836, Houston attacked Santa Anna's army at the [Battle of San Jacinto](#). The Texans won the battle and Texas declared their independence from Mexico. It did not become part of the United States because of differences in antislavery feelings. Texans owned slaves.

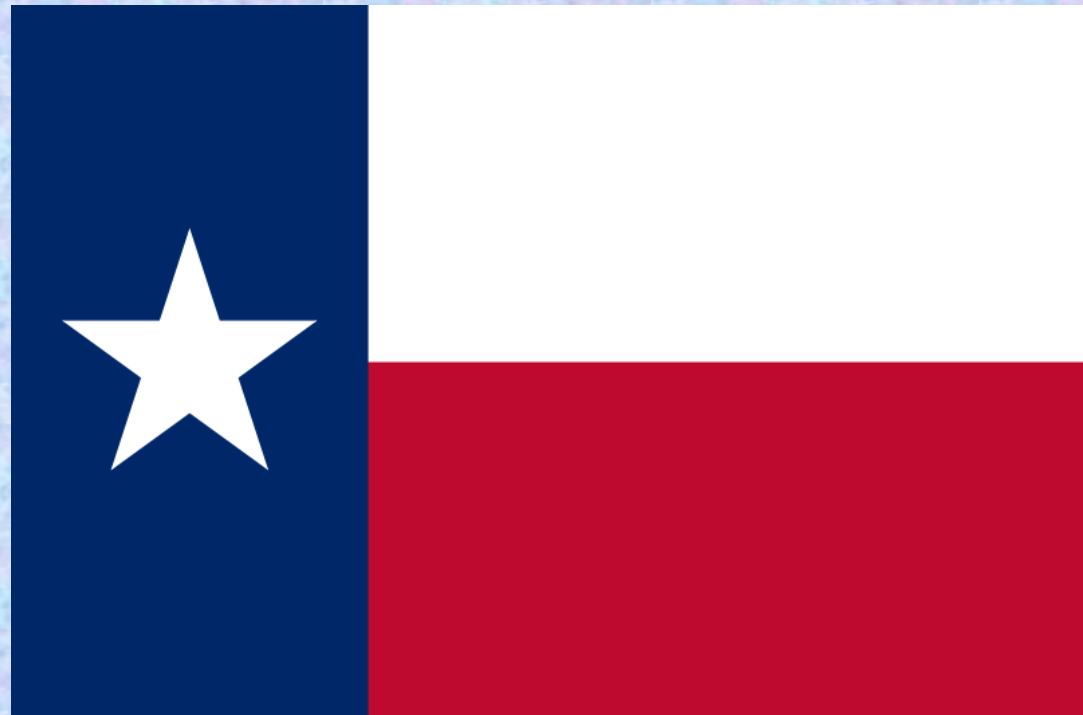


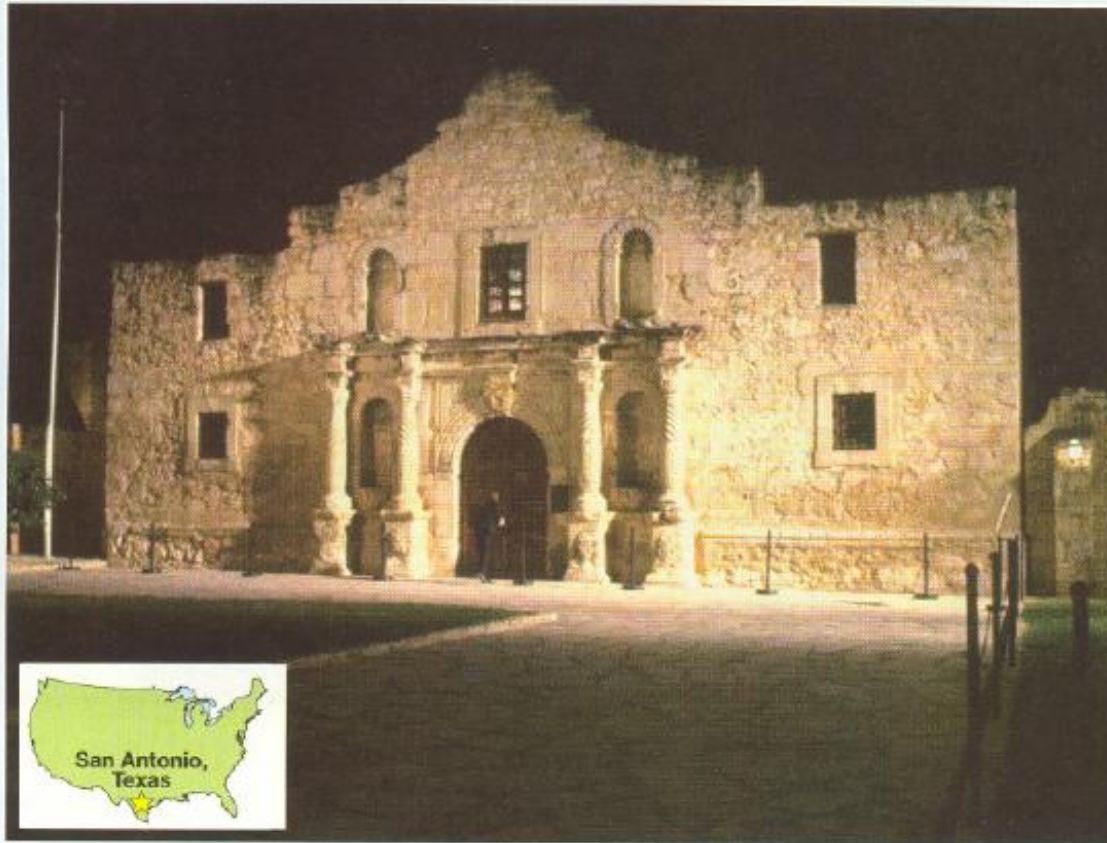
[Santa Anna](#)



[Sam Houston](#)

In battle the Texans had carried a flag with a single white star. After winning independence, they nicknamed their nation the Lone Star Republic. They wrote their own constitution using the United States Constitution as a model. People were divided on whether Texas should join, or annex the United States of America.





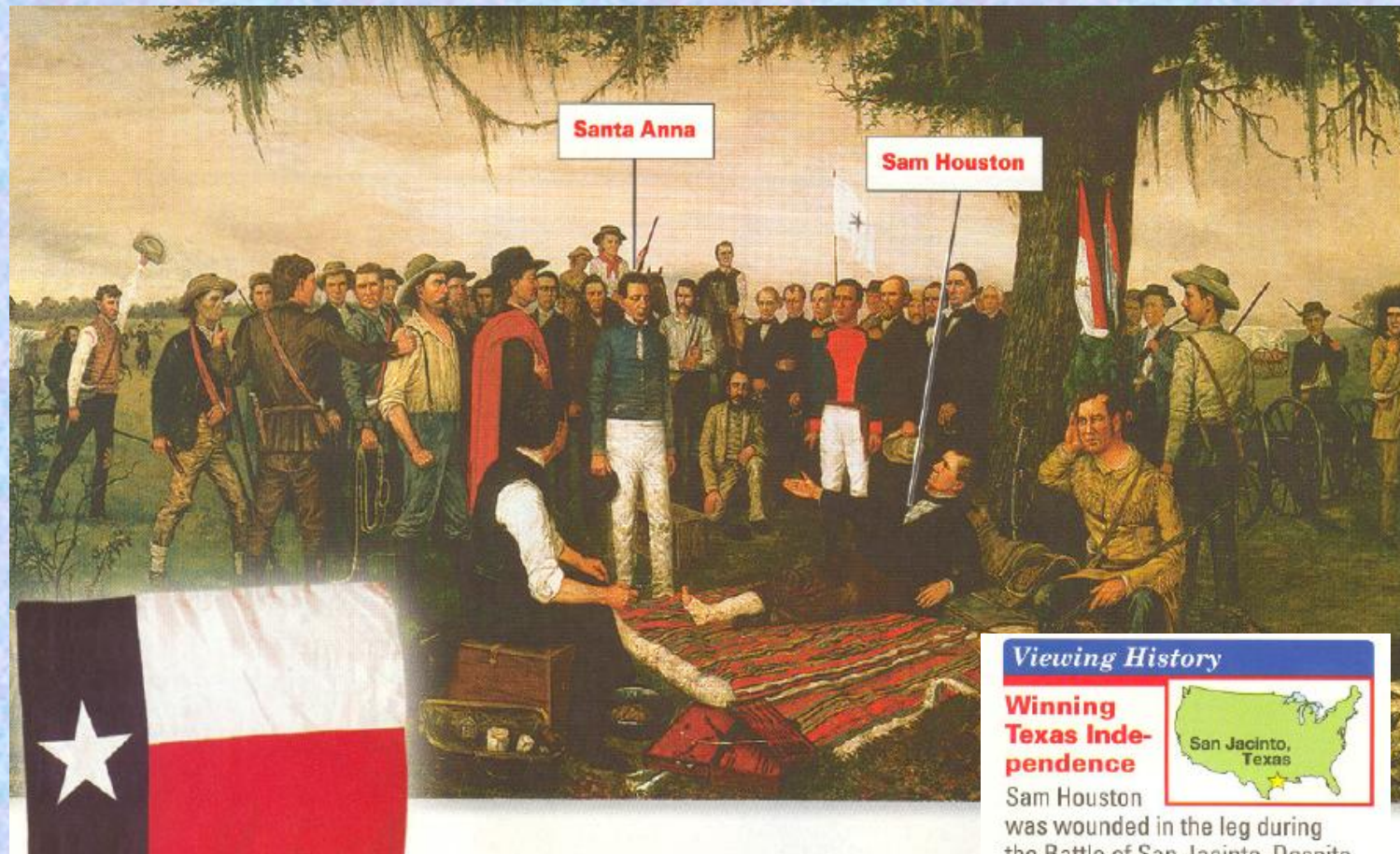
The Alamo

Each year, millions of tourists visit the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. Few of them realize just how close the building came to collapsing into ruin. After 1836, the Alamo was used as a warehouse and a general store. Since 1905, however, the Alamo has been managed by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Three buildings house exhibits on Texas's struggle for independence.



Take It to the NET

Virtual Field Trip For an interactive look at the Alamo, visit *The American Nation* section of www.phschool.com.



Viewing History

Winning Texas Independence



Sam Houston was wounded in the leg during the Battle of San Jacinto. Despite tremendous pain and a boot full of blood, Houston fought on to victory. This painting shows Houston accepting the surrender of the Mexican commander Santa Anna. The flag is that of the Lone Star Republic.

Drawing Conclusions Why was San Jacinto a turning point in Texas history?

3. California and the Southwest

The entire Southwest territory belonged to the Mexicans in the late 1840's. This region was called the New Mexico Territory. It included most of the present-day states of Arizona and New Mexico, all of Nevada and Utah, and parts of Colorado. On these lands the *Pueblo*, *Zuni* and *Apache* Indians lived.



California belonged to the Mexicans. In the early 1840's Spain claimed the California territory. Spain had claimed the region 100 years before the English colonists built homes in Jamestown. Soldiers and priests built the first European settlements in California. California Indians lived in small, scattered groups. They were generally peaceful people. They did not offer much resistance to the soldiers who forced them to work for the missions.

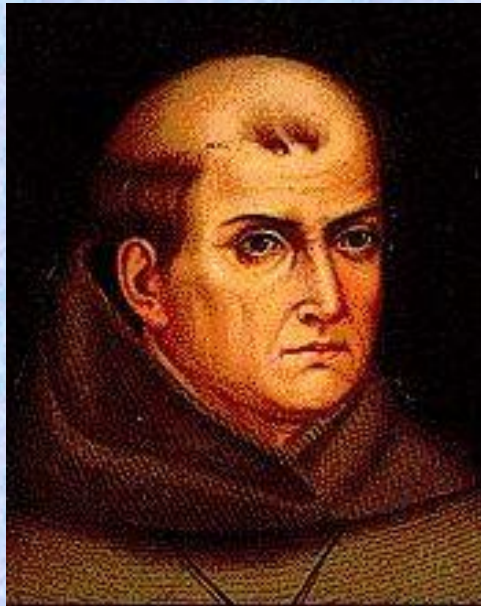


We did not want to give up California.

The Spanish Explorer Juan de Onate claimed the region for Spain in 1598. The Spanish built their city called Santa Fe. The town grew into a busy trading town. Americans were not allowed to settle in Santa Fe or anywhere in New Mexico. [William Becknell](#) was the first American to head for Santa Fe. He was the first to travel to Santa Fe. People who followed Becknell's route called his route the [Santa Fe Trail](#).



California was ruled by Spain and then by Mexico. The Spanish soldiers and missionaries built the first European settlements in California. In 1769 [Father Serra](#) built the first mission in San Diego. Each mission included a church and surrounding land. Each mission became **self-sufficient**, producing enough for its own needs.



[Father Serra](#)



A statue of Father Junipero Serra and a Juaneno Indian boy, on display at the Mission San Juan Capistrano.

In the 1820's, newly independent Mexico decided to speed up the economy by taking the land from the missions and giving it to wealthy individuals who set up large ranches in California. Native Americans did most of the work on the ranches. Vaqueros were Indian and Mexican cowhands that worked on the ranches.



Vaqueros

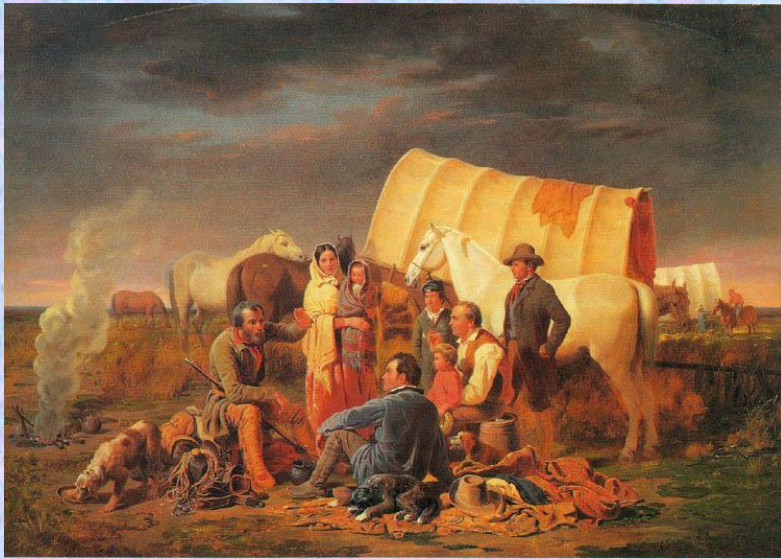
After Mexico won its independence, conditions for Native Americans grew even worse. The New Mexican Government offered mission land to ranchers. Some other ranchers cruelly treated the Indians. These harsh conditions had a deadly effect. Between 1770 and 1850, the Native American population of California declined from 310,000 to 100,000.



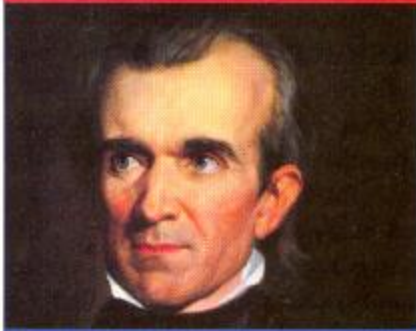
Native Americans go home!

Expansion: A Right and a Duty

As late as the mid 1840's, many Americans saw a Democratic government of the United States as the best in the world. They believed that the United States had the right and the duty to spread its rule all the way to the Pacific Ocean. In the 1840's, a New York newspaper coined a phrase for the belief. The phrase was called Manifest Destiny. Manifest means clear or obvious. Destiny means something that is sure to happen.



An American Profile

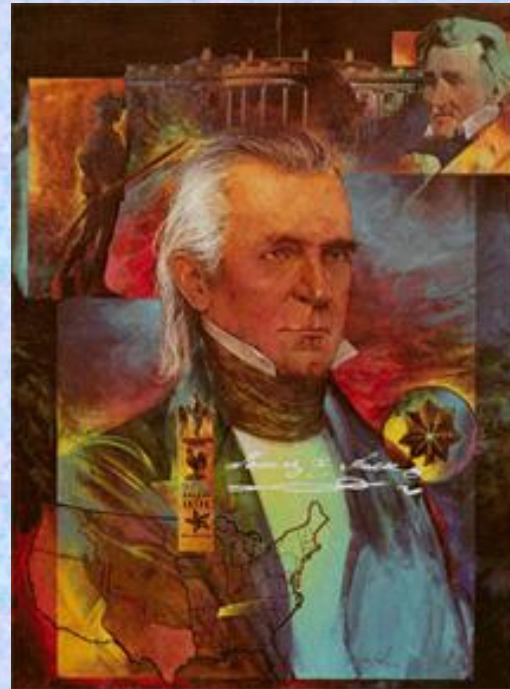


James K. Polk 1795–1849

It is easy to forget just how hard life could be 200 years ago. Consider this: As a teenager, James Polk suffered from severe stomach pains. A doctor discovered gallstones and recommended surgery. Anesthesia was unknown at the time. In 1812, when he was 17, Polk was strapped to a table and operated on while he was awake.

James Polk was a very determined person. Although he had little formal education, he mastered Latin and Greek, graduated with honors from the University of North Carolina, and became a lawyer.

What qualities did Polk show in early life that might serve him well as President?



James Polk

Americans who believed in [Manifest Destiny](#) thought the United States was clearly meant to expand the Pacific. Many Americans believed that they were better than the Native Americans and Mexicans. For these Americans, [racism](#) justified taking over lands belonging to the Indians and Mexicans only considered inferior. In 1844, *James K. Polk* was elected president because he favored the expansion of the United States.

4. The Mexican War

President Polk was determined to add Texas to the United States. To fulfill his dream, he led the United States into a bloody war with Mexico.

Annexing Texas

In 1844, Sam Houston, the press of Texas, signed a treaty of annexation with the United States. The Senate refused to ratify the treaty because they feared that this would cause a war with Mexico.

Sam Houston tricked the Senate by telling them that Texas would become an ally of Britain. When the Senate heard this, they feared a war with Britain so they added Texas to the United States.



Texas is part of the U.S.A.

Sam
Houston



Viewing History

Battle at Buena Vista



Early in the Battle of Buena Vista, the Americans faced a determined Mexican attack. An American officer cried out to General Zachary Taylor: "General, we are whipped." "I know it," replied Taylor. "But the volunteers don't know it. Let them alone. We'll see what they do." The Americans drove the Mexicans back and won the battle. In this picture, Taylor, at center, gives instructions to his artillery.

Drawing Inferences Do you think Taylor really believed that his forces were "whipped"?

Fighting in Mexico

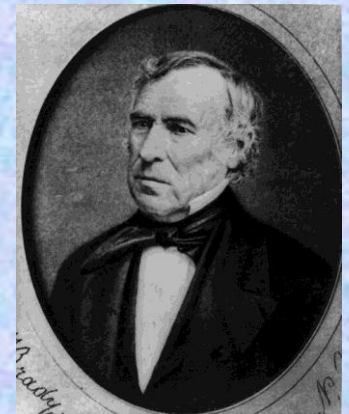
On June 14, 1846 rebels declared California an independent nation. They called it the Bear Flag Republic. In February of 1847 General Zachary Taylor met the Mexican General Santa Anna in the Battle of Buena Vista. The final battle of the Mexican was offered in Chapultepec. The Americans were successful in winning the war against the Mexicans. The Mexicans signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Under the treaty the Mexicans had to **cede**, or give up, all of California and New Mexico to the United States. These lands were called the Mexican Cession. A few years later in 1853, the United States paid Mexico for a strip of land we call today, Arizona and New Mexico. This land was called the Gadsden Purchase.



Viewing History

The Bear Flag

As a symbol of their freedom, the California rebels raised this "Bear Flag." It remains California's state flag today. **Analyzing Primary Sources** (a) Why do you think the flag makers put a single star on the flag? (b) Why do you suppose they chose a grizzly bear as their main symbol?



General Zachary Taylor

5. Americans Rush West



**AS YOU
READ**

**Entering the new
land**

Ask Questions Make up two questions you would ask new arrivals from China if you had the chance to greet them as they entered the United States.

The largest group of settlers to move into the Mexican cession were the Mormons. Mormons belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints founded by Joseph Smith in 1830. The Mormons moved to Ohio. They set up a community called Nauvoo. Soon afterwards, the Mormons had trouble with their neighbors. The Mormons needed to seek refuge, or a place where they would be safe from persecution. The Mormons made a difficult journey to the land we call Utah today. In this land they settled.

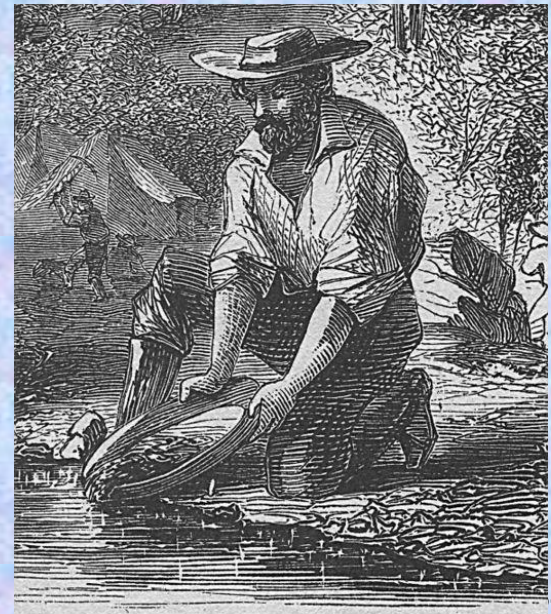
The California Gold Rush

While the Mormons were moving to Utah, thousands of Americans were racing farther west to California. The great attraction there was gold. In 1848 Gold was found in Sutter's Mill. Everybody rushed to the Sutter Mill in Sacramento, California. They hoped to find gold and become rich. Newspapers spread the word of the great gold strike at Sutter's Mill. Soon more than 80,000 people made the long journey to California in 1849. They became known as the Forty-niners.



SUTTER'S MILL AT COLOMA
A reproduction of photograph in possession of Charles B. Turrill, of San Francisco,
from original daguerrotype taken on the spot by R. H. Vance in 1850.
James W. Marshall in the foreground.

Sutter's Mill in 1850



Forty-niners

Trails to the West



GEOGRAPHY Skills

In the 1800s, Americans followed a number of different trails to the West. Mountain passes allowed settlers to cross the Rockies and Sierra Nevada.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate (a) Santa Fe, (b) Santa Fe Trail, (c) Sierra Nevada, (d) Rocky Mountains, (e) San Diego, (f) San Francisco, (g) Salt Lake City.
- 2. Movement** Which trails ended in cities in California?
- 3. Critical Thinking**
Applying Information
 (a) What would be the best route for a pioneer family to take from Independence, Missouri, to Sutter's Fort, California? (b) What mountains would they have to cross? (c) In which community might they seek shelter along the way?

Very few miners struck it rich. Many miners became broke trying to find their fortunes in gold. Many stayed in California and began farming. They did not return home. The gold rush enabled the city of San Francisco to grow from a sleepy town to a bustling city of newcomers.



San Francisco today

California contained a diverse Population. The newcomers included runaway slaves from the south, New Englanders, and people from Hawaii. The Native Americans of California were driven off their land without a means of making a living. Many Chinese sailed across the Pacific Ocean to California to join the Gold Rush. Free blacks joined the Gold Rush hoping to strike it rich. California contained the richest population of African Americans. African Americans and other minorities still faced racial discrimination in California.

An African American digs for gold in Auburn Ravine in 1852. Some of the Gold Rush era's most daring pioneers were black.



Cause and Effect

Causes

- Oregon has fertile land
- Texas is ideal for raising cattle and growing cotton
- Many Americans believe in Manifest Destiny
- Mormons seek a safe home
- Gold is discovered in California

WESTWARD MOVEMENT

Effects

- Texas wins war for independence
- United States annexes Texas
- Britain and United States divide Oregon
- United States defeats Mexico in war
- Cotton Kingdom spreads

Effects Today

- United States stretches from sea to sea
- California and Texas are the most populous states
- Mexican American culture enriches the United States

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Skills

Westward movement increased at a tremendous rate in the mid-1800s.

- 1. Comprehension** List two attractions that drew Americans to the West.
- 2. Critical Thinking Drawing Conclusions** According to this chart, was Manifest Destiny successful? Explain.

Women and the California Gold Rush

Women as well as men had the vision and willpower to make a profit in the mining towns of the California gold rush. One enterprising woman was Luzena Stanley Wilson, who in 1849 arrived at the gold mines near Sacramento with her husband and two sons. At first, the Wilsons built and ran a hotel in Sacramento, but lost it in a flood. Then, the family moved to Nevada City, where Luzena started a new business.



Miners' tools



Working a claim

"I determined to set up [another] hotel. So I bought two boards from a precious pile belonging to a man who was building the second wooden house in town. With my own hands I chopped stakes, drove them into the ground, and set up my table. I bought provisions at a neighboring store, and when my husband came back at night he found, mid the weird light of the pine torches, twenty miners eating at my table. Each man as he rose put a dollar in my hand and said I might count him as a permanent customer. I called my hotel 'El Dorado.' From the first day it was well patronized, and I shortly after took my husband into partnership."

ACTIVITY

Luzena Wilson wanted to run her own business. What were the advantages of running her own business? Divide a piece of paper into two columns, "Advantages" and "Disadvantages." List four items in each column.

The End