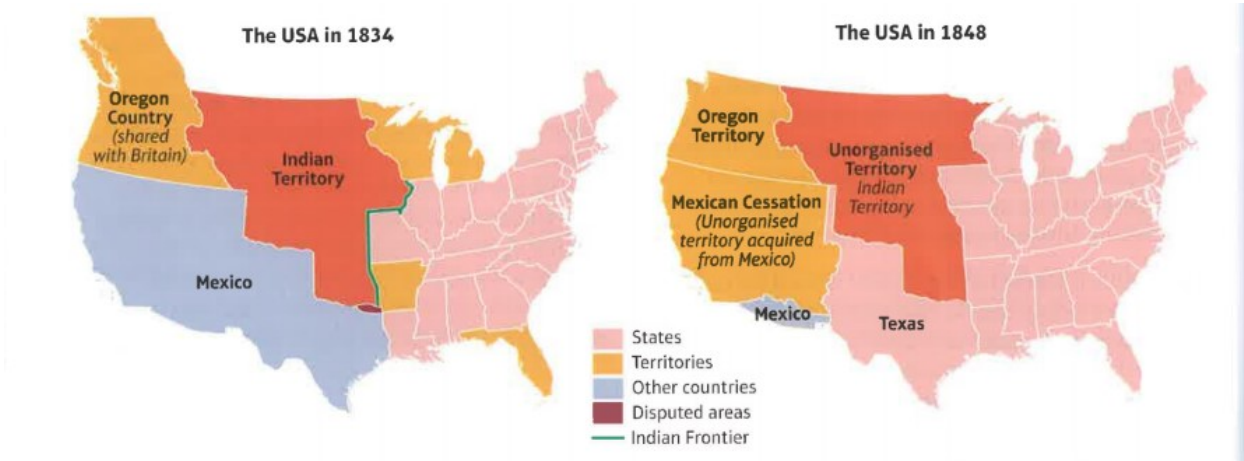


The American West; 1835-95

Key Topic 1: The early settlement of the West, c1835-95



Background: The early settlement of the West is marked by tensions between the native Indians and the white man. The reasons why the settlers migrated West meant the new U.S government had to design a strategy to manage the native population. You need to study how the government tried to manage this migration, how the natives reacted and how lawlessness was tackled in the new settlements which were created by those migrating West.

American West Module 1: The early settlement of the West

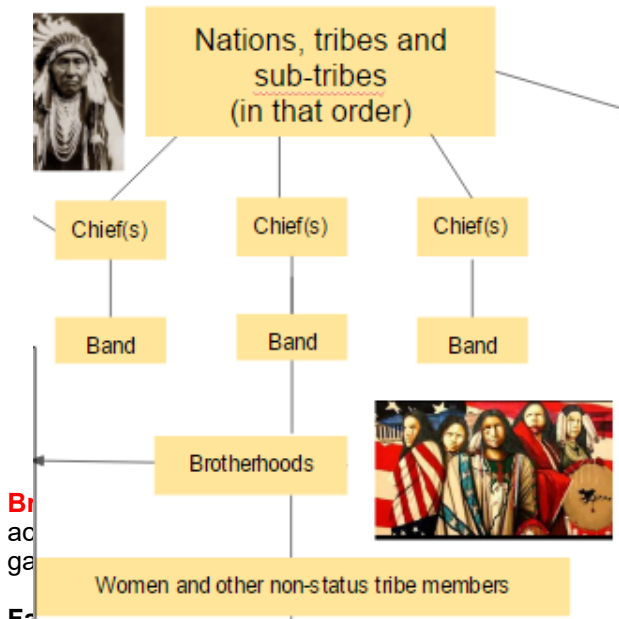
In this module you will revise;

1. **The Plains Indians; their beliefs and way of life** (The beliefs, structure and life of tribes U.S expansion West and the Permanent Indian Frontier, including the Indian Appropriations Act)
2. **Migration and early settlement** (Factors which encouraged migration West, the process and problems of migration (Case studies: Donner Party and Mormon migration, development and problems of white settlement farming)
3. **Conflict and tension** (Reasons for tensions between settlers and Plains Indians - including the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1581, lawlessness in early towns and settlements and how this was tackled (by government and local communities)



KT 1.1: The Plains Indians; their beliefs and way of life

Society structure



The Native Americans lived on the **Great Plains** A.K.A the **Great American Desert** an area of land in the centre of the USA which spans over **1,300,000 km/sq** (over 5 times the area of great Britain!)

Only the largest tribes were called '**Nations**', and they consisted of **tribes, sub tribes and bands**.

The Sioux had 3 tribes, the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota. The **Lakota had 7 sub-tribes**, each with many bands. Bands consisted of between **20 and 700** members typically.

Each band within a tribe had a chief. When the chiefs and **elders** of a tribe met to discuss big issues, this was known as the **tribal council**.

Some chiefs had authority over their band, whereas, in some tribes like the Lakota Sioux the bands and their members could make their own decisions—even if this went against the wishes of the council.

Br
ac
ga
Fa
Bull

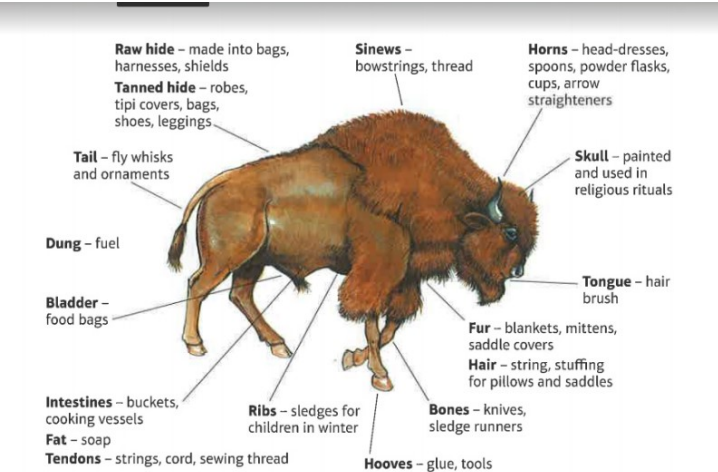

Famous brotherhoods: White Horse Raiders, Strong Hearts, Crow Owners, Last Child Society

Women fed and clothed their families, processed the buffalo and maintained living areas. Their roles were highly valued by other members of the tribe.



Challenges faced on the great plains	Very hot summers Extremely cold winters Wind	⇒ Insulated their tipis in winter by hanging buffalo fur on the inside during winter and opening the sides during the summer.
		⇒ Some tribes lived in lodges in valleys during the winters. These were made of logs, turf and other materials. They could accommodate up to 60 people.
	Very few trees (wood) or materials to burn/build with	⇒ The natives used buffalo dung as fuel instead of wood for fires and buffalo skin for their tipis.
	Terrible storms	⇒ Cone shape of the tipi was good for breaking the wind and dealing with the heavy rain.
	Buffalo were wary of humans and difficult to hunt	⇒ They wore buffalo skins and blood to disguise their scent and appearance, allowing them to get closer.
	The Great Plains were huge	⇒ The natives used horses to cover great distances, hunt and move their belongings. The Comanche tribe had 8000 horses in a tribe of 3000 men.

KT 1.1: The Plains Indians; their beliefs and way of life

<p>Buffalo</p>	<p>The buffalo were essential to the natives, and they used almost every part of the animal</p> 								
<p>Beliefs about nature and land</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature: They believed all natural things had a spirit and animals had their own spirits that could guide humans. Vision quests and ritual dances like the Sun Dance could help them get in touch with the spirit world in order to bring luck or answer their worries/questions Land: The land was viewed as sacred as tribes like the Lakota Sioux believed that the Great Spirit had created their tribe in a special cave in the Paha Sapa region and, due to this, only a few plains Indian tribes farmed big areas of land. MOST tribes shared hunting lands within their tribe and sometimes, following a treaty, with other tribes as well and foraged for food or had only small areas where food was grown. Activities like mining were seen to disrupt the sacred link between the tribe and spirits. War: Tribes didn't engage in warfare/battles unless they thought the odds were in their favour (ie) they outnumbered the enemy) and, unlike white soldiers, retreat wasn't seen as dishonourable. 								
<p>U.S government policies towards the natives</p> <p>“The Indian problem” as they called it</p> <p>Aimed to civilise whilst avoiding conflict</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 1093 478 1193"> <p>Indian Removal Act (1830)</p> </td> <td data-bbox="478 1093 1441 1193"> <p>President Jackson signed this. It pressured 46,000 Natives to move to the east of the Mississippi river and promised them that they would never need to give up this new Indian Territory.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 1193 478 1323"> <p>Indian Trade and Intercourse Act (1834)</p> </td> <td data-bbox="478 1193 1441 1323"> <p>This created a “permanent” Indian Frontier, an official border guarded by forts manned by the U.S army. The aim was to keep the Natives and whites apart, to prevent conflict. It also said that whites couldn't settle on Indian territory and that no white traders could sell guns or alcohol to them.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 1323 478 1453"> <p>Mexican-American war (1848)</p> </td> <td data-bbox="478 1323 1441 1453"> <p>Due to the Americans beating Mexico, they took Mexico's land and ended up surrounding Indian Territory, something which changes the U.S governments approach vastly (maps)</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 1453 478 1628"> <p>Indian Appropriations Act (1851)</p> </td> <td data-bbox="478 1453 1441 1628"> <p>This began to move Natives onto smaller areas of land, with allocated hunting areas—called reservations. The white man now wanted to live and farm on so called ‘Indian Territory’ meaning that the ‘permanent’ Indian Frontier wasn't at all permanent. They hoped that the Indians would begin to farm and live like white people, or become ‘civilised’</p> </td> </tr> </table> 	<p>Indian Removal Act (1830)</p>	<p>President Jackson signed this. It pressured 46,000 Natives to move to the east of the Mississippi river and promised them that they would never need to give up this new Indian Territory.</p>	<p>Indian Trade and Intercourse Act (1834)</p>	<p>This created a “permanent” Indian Frontier, an official border guarded by forts manned by the U.S army. The aim was to keep the Natives and whites apart, to prevent conflict. It also said that whites couldn't settle on Indian territory and that no white traders could sell guns or alcohol to them.</p>	<p>Mexican-American war (1848)</p>	<p>Due to the Americans beating Mexico, they took Mexico's land and ended up surrounding Indian Territory, something which changes the U.S governments approach vastly (maps)</p>	<p>Indian Appropriations Act (1851)</p>	<p>This began to move Natives onto smaller areas of land, with allocated hunting areas—called reservations. The white man now wanted to live and farm on so called ‘Indian Territory’ meaning that the ‘permanent’ Indian Frontier wasn't at all permanent. They hoped that the Indians would begin to farm and live like white people, or become ‘civilised’</p>
<p>Indian Removal Act (1830)</p>	<p>President Jackson signed this. It pressured 46,000 Natives to move to the east of the Mississippi river and promised them that they would never need to give up this new Indian Territory.</p>								
<p>Indian Trade and Intercourse Act (1834)</p>	<p>This created a “permanent” Indian Frontier, an official border guarded by forts manned by the U.S army. The aim was to keep the Natives and whites apart, to prevent conflict. It also said that whites couldn't settle on Indian territory and that no white traders could sell guns or alcohol to them.</p>								
<p>Mexican-American war (1848)</p>	<p>Due to the Americans beating Mexico, they took Mexico's land and ended up surrounding Indian Territory, something which changes the U.S governments approach vastly (maps)</p>								
<p>Indian Appropriations Act (1851)</p>	<p>This began to move Natives onto smaller areas of land, with allocated hunting areas—called reservations. The white man now wanted to live and farm on so called ‘Indian Territory’ meaning that the ‘permanent’ Indian Frontier wasn't at all permanent. They hoped that the Indians would begin to farm and live like white people, or become ‘civilised’</p>								

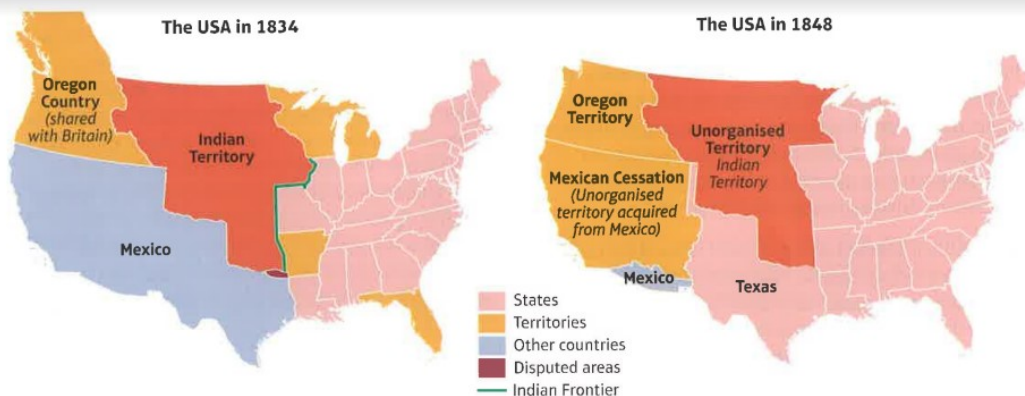


Figure 1.6 Changes in the development of the USA from 1834 to 1848. It shows the USA in 1834 when the Permanent Indian Frontier was established and the USA in 1848, when Texas had join the USA as a state, and new territories were added in the West.

KT 1.2: Migration and early settlement; moving West

Manifest Destiny was the belief (amongst many white people) that it was God's will for white men to migrate west, take over the entire USA and make it 'civilised'. In addition to this belief there were a range of push (want to leave the East) and pull factors (the West is attractive) that encouraged people to make the perilous journey. The experiences of the Donner Party (1846) showed how dangerous the journey could be, whereas the experiences of the Mormons (1846-47), led by Brigham Young, set a template for others to follow

Reasons people made the journey West	
Push factors (reasons to want to leave the East)	Pull factors (reasons to want to settle in the West)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some areas, unemployment reached 25%. People who kept their jobs during the economic crisis faced wage cuts of up to 40%. By 1869, the first Transcontinental Railroad opened, making it very easy to travel West. (both) The government provided \$30,000 for an expedition to map the Oregon Trail and provide reports that would help settlers cross it. John Fremont led the expedition and published his findings as a travel book. In 1837, there was an economic crisis in the East, causing banks to collapse and businesses to fail. The government encouraged expansion West, as they wanted to establish Oregon as a US territory instead of sharing it with Britain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Oregon Trail was mapped in 1825 by Jedidiah Smith. It gave safe passage through the Rocky Mountains and made the journey West more popular. 400,000 people travelled this by 1869. In 1848, gold was found in California. In April 1849, the 'Gold Rush' began, and 100,000 people left East to travel there that month. By 1855, California's population had reached 300,000. People who went searching for gold are known as prospectors (gambling on the idea/prospect of finding gold). Finding gold helped the economy, funded the Transcontinental Railroad and grew California. Many Americans believed in the idea of Manifest Destiny (both) Traders who travelled to Oregon brought back stories of rich farmland.




KEY PROBLEMS	Distance and seasons	Large problem	Most journeys West started in late March or April because, with the trails being very long and mountainous (the Oregon Trail was 3200km, or 3800km if you split off to California), a wagon 'train' could take 6 months (ish) to complete the journey, meaning that if you set off later than April you probably wouldn't arrive before winter.
	Food for their animals	Medium problem	The wagon trains also had Oxen pulling the carts, so travelling in the spring/summer was ideal because there would be fresh grass and plants for the animals to eat, as well as any extra food they took for them.
	Perishable foods	Large problem	Migrants took non-perishable foods, including salt pork, other dried meats and any grains that took a long time to rot. It was quite difficult to judge an appropriate amount of supplies for larger parties and many heading West in the early days found themselves very hungry by the end of their journey.
	Transport	Minor problem	Fully loaded wagons were pulled by Oxen who were slow and travelled 3km per hour, and they often travelled in groups of 20 or more, known as a 'wagon train'. If one wagon had a problem it would slow down the entire party.
	Water	Large problem	The migrants had to cross rivers and, to try and make it safer used camps at either side of the river at the same crossing points. They used the water in them as both drinking water and as a toilet, which led to many people dying of the water-borne disease, Cholera. Additionally, some people drowned during the crossing, particularly in the later year when the waters were higher.
	Occasional Native attacks	Minor problem	There are examples of white migrants being attacked by the Natives, however, these are rare. The Natives were more likely to help migrants travel through their land in exchange for supplies, but the hype caused many migrants to be scared of this.
	People in the group	Variable problem	The mix of personalities meant that, during the tougher times of the journey, problems could occur which led to conflict, power struggles and poor decision making.

KT 1.2: Migration and early settlement; moving West

Donner Party (1846): 300 people set off in 60 wagons, led by the Donner brothers. They set off along the Oregon Trail in May 1846. They split up at Fort Bridger as one of the brothers had read Lansford Hastings's guide book which contained a shortcut. However, instead of cutting 550km off the journey, it added over 100km and the new route didn't have places to resupply either. They reached the Sierra-Nevada mountains in mid October and had to stop in early November when an axle broke on their wagon. Over 1.5m of snow fell and they got stranded, ate their animals and then began eating each other. When rescuers from California reached them in February 1847, only half of the original 80 were left.

Mormons: The Mormons were a Christian group who had some unconventional beliefs which made them shunned other Christians (Protestant/Catholic) on the East coast. Therefore, they decided that they wanted their own settlement outside of U.S territory in the West and Mormons from across the East coast gathered to begin the migration. They set off from Illinois in February and many different groups of them arrived at Omaha (on the Oregon trail) too late in the year to set off on the long stretch towards Salt Lake. They set off from Omaha in April 1847 with 150 people, led by Brigham Young. The 2000km journey was well planned (see below) and reached Salt Lake in the July of 1847 whilst laying the foundation for the rest of the Mormons to follow.

DONNER PARTY	MORMONS (BRIGHAM YOUNG)
FAILURES	SUCCESSSES
Had more elderly people, women and children than the average group	The Mormon leadership did research. They met with, and read guides by, trusted explorers and trail guides before setting off. X-referenced what they said about the trail and Salt Lake Valley.
Trusted a guide without being sure that the route had been taken by the author, Lansford Hastings and they split at Fort Bridger	Brigham Young planned the journey in stages, calculating numbers at each stage. 3000 Mormon families and 2500 wagons in different waves.
Took wagons along the new shortcut which contained rugged terrain, something which caused the axle of a wagon to break.	The bigger waves were divided into smaller groups, each with a leader. This reduced arguments and meant everyone knew what their purpose was.
Due to no clear leadership or well thought out plan, arguments raged within the splinter group—something which undoubtedly featured in the group decisions when deciding who to eat first.	Each group also had people with a mix of skills which meant that they could survive if they were split from the main group in an emergency or accident
Didn't have enough food for themselves and the livestock to accommodate the untested route, and there was very little grass along the route for the livestock.	Young taught the migrants how to remain safe at night and keep their cattle safe through forming their camp in a larger circle shape.
	Resting places were planned along the way, and the first wave of Mormons left supplies and notebooks with useful strategies behind for the next wave to use. This meant they were in no rush, the animals were well rested and every successive group had extra supplies and guidance. This built up the Oregon trail.



The Mormons had some interesting ideas that helped them meet the challenges of the Salt Lake Valley;

1. Young decided that all land was Church owned, so no individuals argued over land.
2. They built large irrigation systems from rivers to ensure they had water to grow crops and reservoirs.
3. They set up settlements all over the Salt Lake Valley to take advantage of the natural environment. Some settlements specialised in food production, mineral mining or timber based products. All settlements had a Church leader to manage their projects.
4. Their successful settlement in the valley enabled them to expand beyond it in order to acquire more varied supplies and expand their population.

KT 1.3: Conflict and tension; Natives and the U.S/white settlers



We decided to turn back because we saw a brotherhood armed to the teeth and ready to fight. I'm sure they were coming for us, and I've heard of these attacks before; I heard that they scalped the adults in a family and sold their children into slavery. They're scary man. These savages are doomed and will soon be civilised by the might of our U.S government—we will bring them the law, Christianity and a focus on money. I know the Mormons got along with the Pueblo Indians and learnt a lot about how to survive, but they are freaks too. Thank God they left our civilised society to head West.

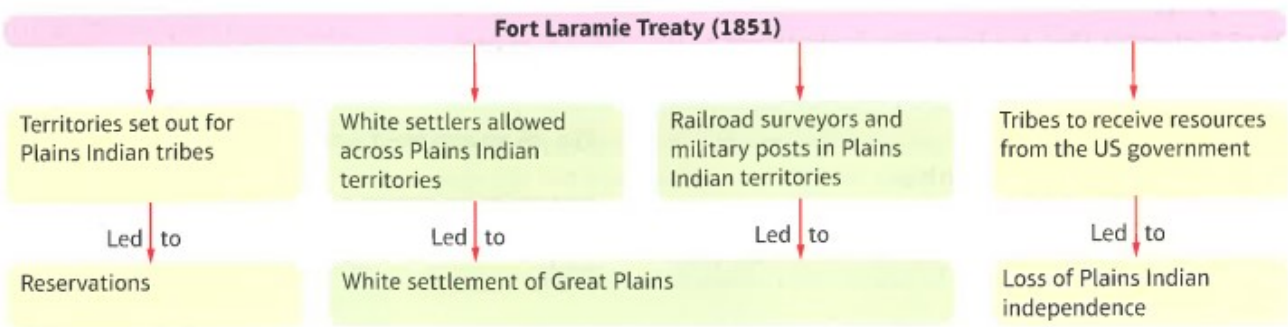
We have enough conflict between tribes anyway going back centuries. The last thing we need is white people getting caught in the middle or becoming a problem for us. They keep going through Indian territory to reach the West. The California Gold Rush of 1849 has only increased the numbers and made the chances of conflict worse. They disrupt our buffalo hunt through making them stampede in unusual directions and use up the grass supplies in the carefully managed buffalo feeding areas. No wonder a few of the more hostile tribes keep an eye on these white pioneers and, inevitably, there have been a few isolated incidents. The white man judge us all the same. RACISTS!



Natives agreed to	U.S government agreed to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End fighting between tribes Allow white people to travel through Indian Territory safely Let the railroad companies develop Allow the U.S to build roads with forts on through their lands Pay fines/compensation if individuals from their tribes broke the above terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Plains Indians from white settlers Prevent migrants settling on Plains Indian territory Pay tribes an annuity of \$50,000 if they met the terms of the treaty (which would be nearly impossible given previous problems studied. This meant that in reality the annuity was always much lower)

Problems sorting the treaty out:

1. Choosing a representative from each tribe: because some tribes were so large (ie the Sioux) that one person couldn't represent what all sub tribes and bands wanted. They sent Conquering Bear
2. Getting all tribes to send a representative: Some tribes didn't attend due to attitudes about the white man, lack of interest in their decisions or simple communication issues
3. Agreeing boundaries: Difficult because the tribes followed the buffalo herds, something which meant that fixed boundaries between tribes were not suitable.
4. Translation difficulties: The treaty was in English and not all tribes had translators, meaning they had signed something they didn't understand or actually agree to!



Problems with the treaty after it was signed:

1. In some tribes (ie) Lakota Sioux) each band decided if they wanted to follow the treaty or not, undermining the success of it
2. Due to translation problems and cultural understanding about land, different tribes interpreted the treaty's terms differently.
3. The boundaries term of the treaty was not taken seriously by the U.S government. When the Sioux complained their hunting grounds were too small, the U.S instructed them to hunt on the territory of other tribes, something which inevitably would break the terms of the treaty (Did the U.S do this on purpose to avoid paying annuities?)

Significance of the treaty:

1. Was the first step towards reservations; because it identified areas that 'belonged' to each tribe. These were shrunk further and further over time
2. The treaty broke the Permanent Indian Frontier, as now white migrants could travel through Indian Territory. Many chiefs saw this as the U.S breaking their original word / lacking honour.
3. The agreement bound the Natives to the U.S government: as they now depended on the U.S government for their \$50,000 annuities to survive comfortably

KT 1.3: Conflict and tension; Law and Order

During the early settlement of the plains in the 1840s communities had to depend on each other, so people followed the rules (mostly). However, the California Gold Rush changed things and mass settlement happened very quickly, with California's population increasing from 8000 in 1846 to approximately 300,000 by 1855. Whenever rumours of gold broke out huge tent cities of thousands would build in that area, often within days. With the money, fast movement of people and rush to get land, lawlessness got out of hand. The problem wasn't that there were no laws; just the lack of law enforcement meant that breaking the law wasn't discouraged because you were unlikely to be punished for your crimes. The U.S government recognised that this was a problem that needed solving, and fast!!!

Problems with law and order

Claim jumping: Although Californian law specified what amount of land was fair for a prospector to buy and gave him all rights to gold found on that land, other people would use connections, corruption and extortion to buy claims from other people or jump the queue, often causing arguments over land

Salting a claim: Land without gold could be made attractive to inexperienced buyers by scattering flakes of gold on parts of an unattractive claim. When they realised they had been conned, fights broke out

Vices: Prostitution, gambling and alcohol often caused violence due to affection for women, arguments over cheating when gambling in the various games available (craps, poker, blackjack), and the alcohol acted as a catalyst for any disagreement.

Gangs: Many people settled in San Francisco, whose population went from 1000 to 25,000 in the year 1849 alone. This, combined with reduced success on claims, led to rival gangs taking control of the city. Different gangs would burst into saloons and kill the customers, taking all of their money, and the law enforcement was incapable of dealing with this!

Ratio of ordinary people in relation to law enforcement officials: A town had to have 5000 people before a Sheriff could be appointed. This was a dangerous job, and many were killed for trying to uphold the law, meaning that the power of criminals often exceeded that of the law.

Professional mining companies: By the mid 1850s large mining companies were buying up claims at a premium price and using connections/corruption to prevent smaller miners from getting claims they wanted. This caused huge rivalry and increased the rate that people turned to crime

Racism: Prospectors came from all over the world, landing on both the East and West coasts. This created a mix of ethnic groups, many of which stuck to their own. In particular, the amount of migrants coming from China rose from 2000 in 1851, to 20,000 in 1852, due to famine. Chinese prospectors were banned from buying new claims and were only allowed to work or buy old claims, where the gold deposits were mostly gone. This created further tensions and made some gangs form based on race.

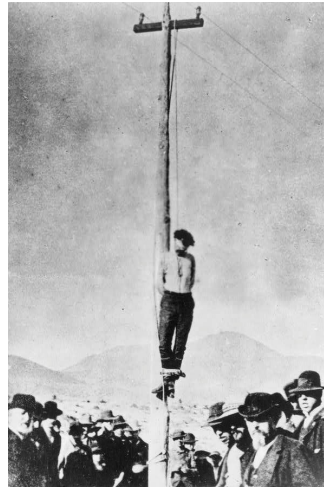


WARNING!

NOTICE IS GIVEN that any person found Pilfering, Stealing, Robbing, or committing any act of Lawless Violence will be summarily

HANGED

Vigilance Committee.



Attempted solutions

Federal Government solutions:

Territory or state?: If a territory in the West had 60,000 people or more then it could apply to become a state and have its own laws. If they had less then their law enforcement was controlled by a system set by politicians on the East Coast. It included;

3 Judges and a Marshall: The Marshall had to hunt down suspected criminals and bring them to court, where the 3 Judges would decide their case.

Deputies and Posses: As the population and crime rates grew the Marshall could appoint a deputy to help him run the territory. If they were hunting a criminal gang they could instruct any law abiding man to join a Posse and help them bring the criminals to justice

Mining camps:

because they grew and shrank so fast the mining camps needed their own solution. They created their own temporary courts and temporary Judges.

Vigilance committees;

Due to the crime wave in San Francisco during 1851 the townspeople set up something called a vigilance committee, better known as Vigilantes. The rich and powerful who weren't corrupt in San Francisco paid for a group of around 200 men to bring suspected criminals to trial. In 1851 89 men were captured, of which half were found not guilty, a quarter were deported, 15 were handed to the Federal Marshall and the rest were hanged. Once law and order were restored, they disbanded.

The spread of the vigilance committee; This trend spread quickly throughout the West and mining camps as it seemed to work well in San Francisco. These committees worked well where they decided to work alongside the Marshalls and Sheriffs.

Problems with the attempted solutions

1. Vigilantes often hanged people with limited evidence and this created a reputation for them taking the law into their own hands. Sometimes vigilantism was used to settle scores and fuelled gang violence
2. Geography; Areas were huge meaning that news travelled slowly and criminals were hard to track. For example, a Kansas sheriff's country averaged 200,000km².
3. Law enforcement was badly paid, meaning they were often accepting of bribes and Marshalls / Sheriffs were often involved in corruption (discussed later module!)
4. **Sheriff bias:** they had no law enforcement training and often showed bias towards friends and/or people who backed up their position

The American West; 1835-95
Key Topic 1: The early settlement of the West, c1835-95
Possible exam Questions

Explain 2 consequences of ... (8 marks—2 x 4 marks)

- 1. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851**
- 2. Mass settlement in the West**
- 3. Setting up of the Oregon Trail**
- 4. The U.S government's expansion West**

Write a narrative account analysing... (8 marks)

- 1. The Donner Party's journey West**
(may include; Landsford Hasting's guide and weather)
- 2. U.S Government policy towards the Natives**
(may include; 'Permanent Indian Frontier and the U.S Mexico war)
- 3. The Mormon migration of 1846-47**
(may include; attitudes towards the Mormons in the East and the role of Brigham Young)
- 4. The Fort Laramie Treaty**
(may include; the role of tribal representatives and the significance of annuities for the Natives)

Explain two of the following; the importance of x for y (16 marks— 2 x 8 marks)

- 1. The importance of brotherhoods in tribal society**
- 2. The importance of the buffalo in the survival of the Plains Indians**
- 3. The importance of the California Gold rush in encouraging migration West**
- 4. The importance of Vigilance committees in maintaining law and order**

The American West; 1835-95
Key Topic 1: The early settlement of the West, c1835-95
TOP 20 QUIZ

1. Who was secretary of State for War in 1914?