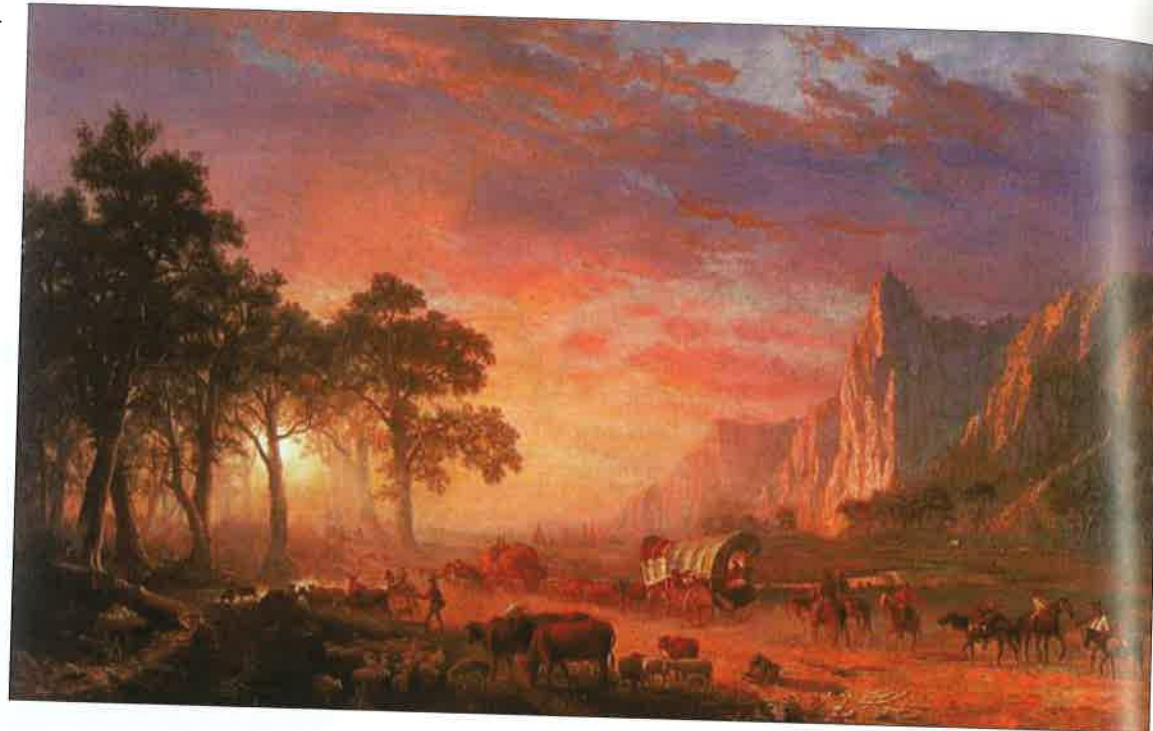


The Statehood Era

With the establishment of Washington Territory and the conclusion of Indian conflicts, pioneers from the United States and beyond poured into the region. Until 1869, the most affordable and common method to reach Washington Territory was by wagon train across the Oregon Trail, as seen in this famous painting.



The Battle of Spokane Plains in 1858 effectively brought an end to the Indian Wars within Washington Territory proper. There were still minor skirmishes and episodes of violence in the following decades, but nothing as large as the Yakama and Spokane wars. The conclusion of the Indian Wars in Washington Territory marked a significant historical and cultural shift for the region. For thousands of years, Washington was home to the Coastal and Plateau Indians. As a result, Indian culture, customs, and society were the dominant civilizations of Washington. In addition to cultural supremacy, Indians constituted the vast majority of the population.

Military victories by the United States Army and the negotiation of treaties by the federal government ended the era of Indian supremacy in Washington. By 1860, most Indians in Washington lived on a reservation. Any Indians who did not live on a reservation would eventually face a difficult decision. Either they lived amongst the white pioneers without the protections and assurances of a reservation or they moved to a preexisting reservation with other tribes. Faced with this decision, most Indians chose to leave their ancestral

homes for the safety and peace of a reservation. A few tribes were large enough or lived in areas so remote that the government granted new reservations. Indians who chose to continue living on their traditional homelands instead of a reservation, often became engulfed by the pioneer communities growing around them. Many of these Indian tribes became absorbed into white communities and dozens of tribes disappeared from Washington.

While the fortunes of Indians in Washington dwindled, the territory became a place of immense opportunity for pioneer settlers. To the American public, Washington Territory was delivered from the threat of "hostile" Indians and made ready for the advancement of American civilization. Even better, through the Organic Act of 1853, Washington was now an incorporated territory complete with a territorial government. The existence of a territorial government reassured the public that Washington was no longer a wild frontier, but a land of "progress," ready to embrace the "modern world" and the "American dream." Thus, more Americans began to view Washington Territory as a viable place to settle.

ENTICING PEOPLE TO WASHINGTON TERRITORY

By 1853, America had acquired through war, negotiation, or purchase, all lands within the continental United States. But owning the land and making it useful to the nation were two very different things. Many government leaders and officials expressed concerns about populating and protecting these vast territories. They knew to properly exploit these lands, people would have to move in large numbers and settle the American West.

To entice settlers, the federal government decided to embark upon a policy of Indian removal and land redistribution. The first goal, **Indian removal**, was designed to free lands for pioneer settlement and to prevent violence between Americans and Indians by separating the two peoples. Unsurprisingly, Indian removal resulted in widespread warfare and violence. In spite of numerous large and famous victories, most Indian tribes were defeated by United States Army forces and placed on reservations throughout the 1850s and 1860s.

Once Indians were successfully removed from territories in the West, their former lands became the private property of the American government. The American government had no intention of holding onto all of this property. Instead, the government determined to offer the land to any individuals willing to settle on the land. The federal government had already attempted such a policy in Oregon Country in 1850 with the **Donation Land Claim Act**. This act was quite successful in Oregon itself and as a result the territory became a state in 1859.

The federal government hoped to duplicate the success of the Donation Land Claim Act with the 1862 **Homestead Act**. The Homestead Act offered land to any pioneer willing to move to the American West. There were two options for obtaining the land. First, a pioneer could receive the land title for 160 acres if he or she lived on the land for five years and improved upon its original state. Secondly, any pioneer who lived on the land for six months could purchase the 160 acres of land for \$1.25 an acre.

Historians estimate that between 400,000 and 600,000 families moved to the American West as a result of the Homestead Act. Moreover, the opportunity was not made available just to Americans, but Europeans as well. The United States government advertised the land sale heavily in Europe and as a result many foreign immigrants came to the American West and Washington Territory.

FOCUS ON



▲ Ewing Young sold cattle like the bull above, in the Oregon Country during the early 1800s.

Ewing Young ...

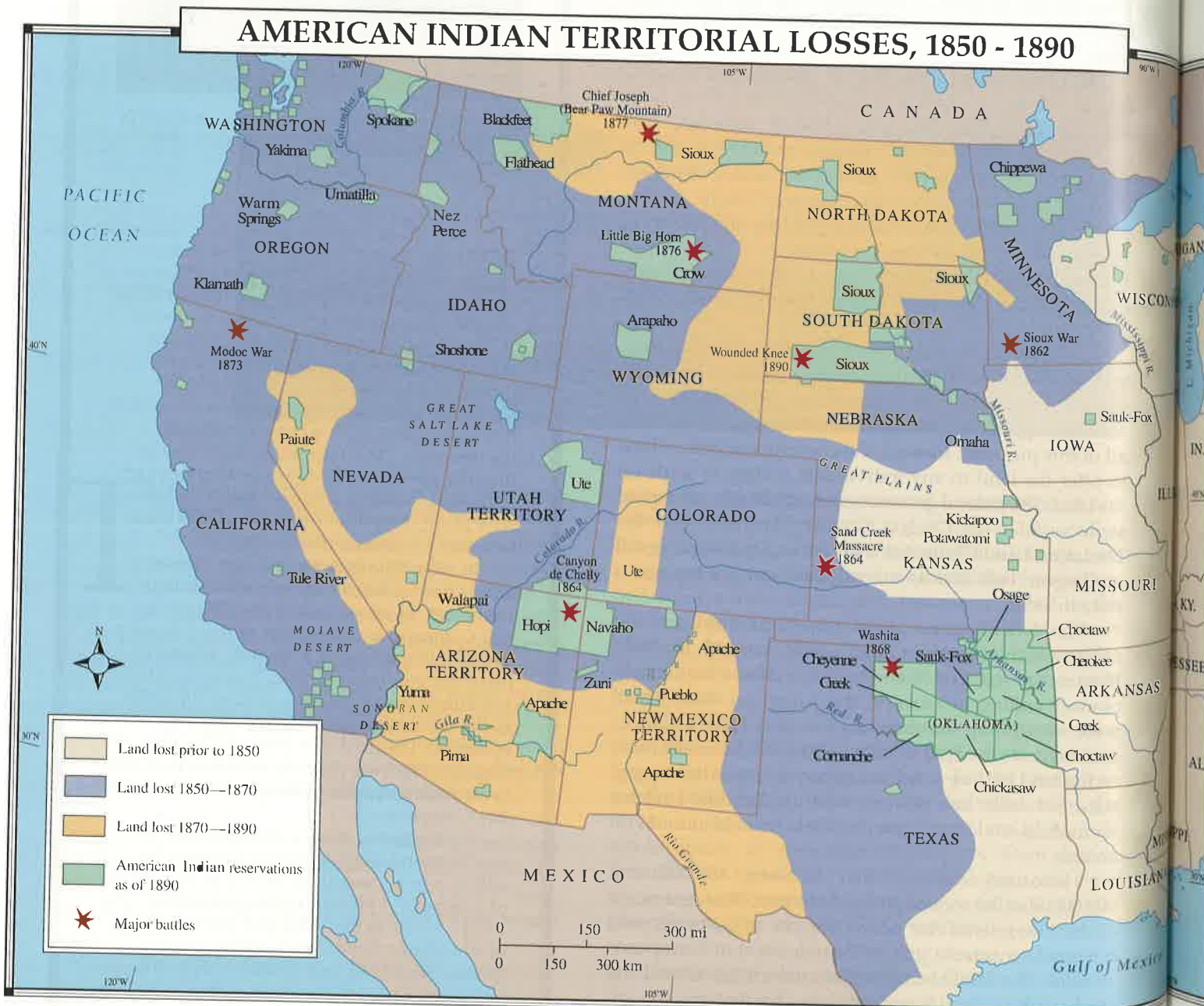
Ewing Young was one of the first pioneers to settle north of the Columbia River, in the Chehalis River Valley. Young was born in Tennessee in 1792. Finding opportunities limited east of the Mississippi River, he headed for the American West in 1822. Young originally worked as a freelance mountain man, trapping furs and trading with whomever offered the best price. As a trapper, Young chose to illegally operate in the Mexican territories of California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico. As a result, American fur traders often were reluctant to conduct trade with him.

In 1834, Young came to Oregon Country with a herd of horses for sale. After selling his horses, he chose to defy the Hudson's Bay Company and live north of the Columbia River. Young operated a sawmill, whiskey distillery, and farm. In 1838, Young traveled to California and guided a herd of 700 cattle to the Willamette River Valley, where he re-settled. The herd was a first in Oregon Country, allowing pioneers to obtain beef and cattle from a supplier other than the Hudson's Bay Company.

Ewing Young died in 1841. He was the wealthiest resident in Oregon Country. In addition to his wealth he served as an example of a successful pioneer to the generations who would follow in the 1850s and 1860s. Young demonstrated to potential immigrants the farming, ranching, and economic opportunities in Oregon Country.

American Indian Territorial Losses, 1850-1890 ...

When the United States of America officially gained its independence from Great Britain in 1783, the nation was physically and financially exhausted. The new country could not afford confrontation with Indians in the eastern United States over territory. To prevent conflict, the American government went to great lengths to ensure its citizens respected Indian land. By 1830, the story was different. President Andrew Jackson ordered all Indians living east of the Mississippi to migrate west. In doing so, Jackson promised that these lands were reserved for the Indians and Americans would not take them. However in 1846, the United States acquired Oregon from the British and in 1848 Texas, California, and the Southwest from Mexico. With so much new land available and a population eager to migrate, the United States retracted its promise and began to negotiate treaties with Indians to relinquish land and settle on reservations.



▲ American Indian Territorial Losses, 1850-1890

RESERVATIONS

Loss of the Homeland

Indian Reservations in the Pacific Northwest



▲ Indian Reservations in the Pacific Northwest

Most Indians peacefully moved onto reservations. A few tribes sought to retain their traditional lands and fought the United States government. In spite of a few victories, Indians gradually succumbed to the United States Army and most major conflicts were concluded by 1877. In drawing a close to the Indian Wars of the American West, American leaders assured Indian tribes that the reservations would belong to them with no more incursions. Once again, though, the American government ignored previous promises and by the 1880s, Indian reservations became smaller and some even disappeared. These two maps demonstrate the enormous territorial losses suffered by the Indians both in the United States and Oregon Country during this time period.

THE OREGON TRAIL

Anyone wishing to take advantage of the Homestead Act still had to arrive in Washington Territory, and much of the West, through the **Oregon Trail**. The Oregon Trail used by the first pioneers to Oregon Country in the 1840s, was slow, laborious, and, at times, dangerous. On average, it took wagon trains 169 days to complete the journey. The length of the journey and the dangers faced discouraged many potential pioneers against making the trek. However, by the 1850s the situation had improved. Between 1850 and 1869, the average journey across the trail only needed 129 days to complete. The shortening of the journey removed the doubts from the minds of many pioneers.

The increase of the speed in which the Oregon Trail could be traveled was due to a variety of factors. First, the infrastructure of the trail improved. The first pioneers on the Oregon Trail were literally creating the route. They were using trails by Indians, explorers, fur traders, and missionaries. These trails were never completely linked together before. Consequently, the ground was uneven and filled with rocks, boulders, and debris. Additionally, rivers and streams were forded or rafts constructed by hand to cross them. By the 1850s, though, paths were cleared and major obstacles were removed or overcome. The result was a trail in better condition for travelers and wagons. The improvements in the trail inevitably decreased the time it took to travel the route.

A second reason for better travel time was improvements in wagon technology. Wagons in the 1830s and 1840s were designed for agricultural use and travel throughout the eastern United States. These wagons simply were not as efficient for the rugged terrain and rigors of the Oregon Trail. As more people traveled the Oregon Trail, modifications were made to the design of wagons to make them more stable and less likely to tip. Also, wheels and axels were made more durable for the journey. These improvements meant pioneers spent less time repairing wagons and more time actually traveling.

A third, and very crucial, reason for the faster journey along the Oregon Trail was its adaptability. The original Oregon Trail basically traveled from Independence, Missouri to Fort Vancouver in Oregon Country. By the 1850s and 1860s, a series of trails began to branch off the main Oregon Trail. These trails are too numerous to mention them all, but some of the more famous include: the **California Trail**, **Sublette Cutoff**, **Applegate Trail**, **Free Emigrant Trail**, **Barlow Road**, and **Longmire Trail**. The creation of additional trails adapted the Oregon Trail to fit the needs of many travelers. Now pioneers could journey to other parts of Washington Territory, Oregon, Idaho, California, Utah, and Nevada, that were not serviced by the main Oregon Trail. This in turn enabled many a pioneer to more quickly reach the destination of his or her choice.



▲ Wagon train on the Oregon Trail.

CONNECTING TO HISTORY

Branches of the Oregon Trail ...

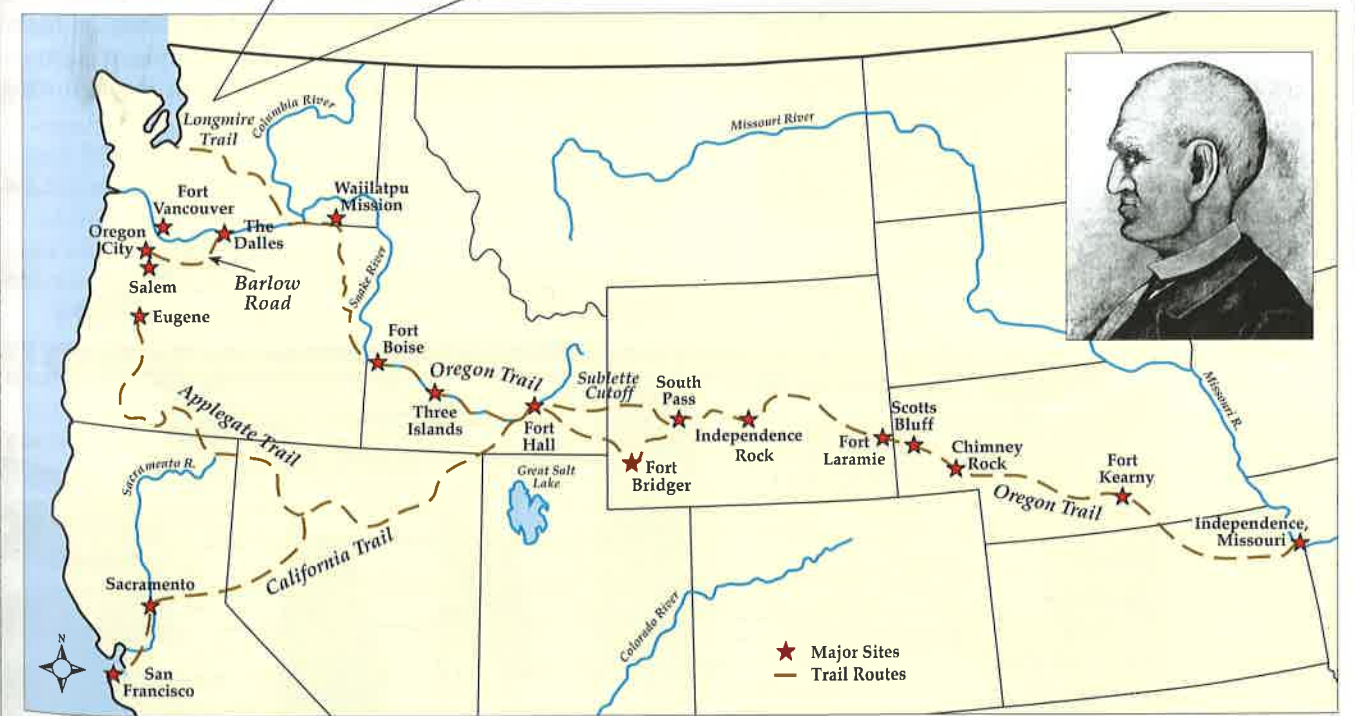
The Oregon Trail received its name because it was used primarily as a route to Oregon Country when it was established in the early 1840s. But with the territorial expansion of the United States, the Oregon Trail ceased to be a single route and instead branched out in several different directions. The change in the Oregon Trail reflected the wealth of new destinations, such as California or the Southwest. In addition, where the old trail culminated at Fort Vancouver, other destinations within Oregon Country became popular, such as southern Oregon or Puget Sound. As a result, more routes branched from the main trail to reach these destinations.



▲ James and Virinda Longmire



◀ The Longmire Trail, established by James Longmire, is an example of the numerous ways in which the Oregon Trail was expanded and adapted to meet new needs.



▲ The Oregon Trail and Jesse Applegate.

PIONEERS IN WASHINGTON

The word pioneer often conjures images of individuals and families living in isolated homes, farms, and ranches in the forests, deserts, and mountains of the American West. That image certainly holds true for other parts of the western United States, but in Washington the reality was quite different. In spite of the improved travel conditions on the Oregon Trail and the generous terms of the Donation Land Claim and Homestead acts, the population of Washington remained relatively low during the 1850s and 1860s.

In 1850, there were only 1,201 people living in Washington. By 1860 that number increased to 11,594 people. Most residents in Washington Territory tended to live in towns and cities, rather than rural settings. This fact was due to Washington's geography. The harsh deserts of Eastern Washington made life difficult for most pioneers. Conversely, the climate of Western Washington was more suitable for pioneers. However, thick forests and poor soils often made sustaining agricultural activities quite difficult.

As a result of slow population growth and a difficult geography, Washington was unique amongst western states and territories in that its population mostly lived in cities. Because of the population's urban character, residents of Washington differed greatly from other pioneers in the American West. In general, people living in cities tend to be involved in a great diversity of economic activities and are more politically active. This was certainly true of Washington Territory. Among the largest cities in the 1850s and 1860s were Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Spokane, and Yakima.

Isolated log cabins on the frontier, such as the one here, are a common conception of pioneer life. In Washington Territory, the pioneer experience was much more urban, with most new immigrants living in cities or towns.



PEOPLE

By far the largest group of people who immigrated to Washington Territory by the 1850s and 1860s were white Americans from the eastern United States. In part this was a reflection of American society. The most significant minority group in the United States at this time were African Americans. However, the vast majority of African Americans lived in the South, where slavery was still legal at this time. These African Americans could not leave without becoming fugitives from the South.

Still, there were free African Americans living in northern states. They too faced discrimination when moving west. Free blacks were forbidden from claiming land via the Donation Land Claim Act. Moreover, Oregon Territory, and later the state of Oregon, banned African Americans from living there. The discrimination in Oregon did convince some African Americans who wanted to move west to come to Washington Territory. But these residents numbered less than 100 for most of the 1860s and they lived primarily in communities near Puget Sound.

While whites from the United States constituted most of Washington Territory's population, there were other groups. A small, but significant portion of immigrants from Europe, particularly Scandinavia, Ireland, and Italy settled in Washington Territory. In addition, a small Chinese community worked in mines in Idaho and Washington in the 1860s. These minority groups were small, but would be important in the following decades.



As more families migrated to Washington Territory, schools became more common in the region. Early school houses, like this one in Sultan, were generally small and contained numerous grade levels in one building.

DEVELOPMENT OF TOWNS

Towns and cities in Washington during the 1850s and 1860s were much different than those of today. Streets were dirt pathways, with the occasional cobblestone road or drive. Motorized vehicles were non-existent and the transportation of people and goods were done with horses, wagons, carts, and carriages. The majority of buildings in a given town or city were constructed of wood. Wood construction was so common because it was readily available and affordable in Washington Territory. In addition, wood buildings could be erected faster than brick and stone, thus quickly accommodating the growth of both new and existing towns.

While individual circumstances varied greatly between various towns and cities, there were some common elements. Most towns were chartered by the territorial government and had their own city, or municipal government, such as a mayor and/or town council. There were law enforcement officials like sheriffs, deputies, and police officers. As Christianity played such a fundamental role in American life during this time period, most towns had at least one, if not several, churches to accommodate residents.

Additionally, schools were present in most towns. However, attendance was not compulsory and the grade levels offered were not consistent from town to town. In general schools existed solely to provide basic instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, and social studies. Other subjects were most often not available for study.



▲ Brower's Grocery in Ballard, Washington.



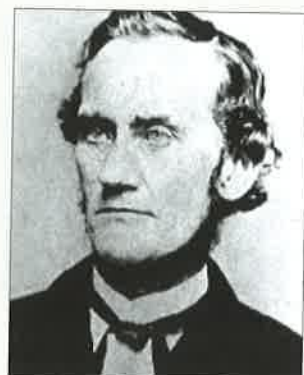
▲ Methodist Church in Kent, Washington.

Most people envision the pioneers of the Oregon Trail as intrepid farmers who came to Washington Territory to stake out homesteads and farms. While this image is partially true, there were a wide variety of people who each came to the region for different reasons. Some pioneers, such as George Washington Bush, Michael T. Simmons, and James Longmire came to claim homesteads and farm. Others, like Henry Yesler and Peter Kirk, brought some of the earliest industrial business to the region. Although fewer women made the journey, some women, like Lizzie M. Ordway, made important contributions to life in Washington Territory.



George Bush ...

George Washington Bush and his wife, Isabella, moved into Washington in 1844. George Bush is considered to be one of the original founders of Washington State. Bush left Illinois for Oregon, where he believed he could "... find a place in the world, if there was any, where a Negro would be treated like a man." He and his family searched and finally decided to settle on a spot of land on the Skookumchuck River. Once established, he staked his claim on 640 acres of land. Eventually this stake of land would be named the city of Centerville. Later, against the wishes of George Washington Bush, the city would be renamed Centralia.



Arthur Denny ...

Arthur Denny and his family moved to Puget Sound, settling on Alki Point in 1851, but moved to Elliott Bay in 1852. Traditionally, Arthur Denny, his family, and associates are considered the founders of Seattle. Denny took an active role in the promotion and development of both Seattle and Washington Territory. As a large landowner, much of his personal property became the basis of modern Seattle. Denny also encouraged businesses to settle in Puget Sound and was instrumental in helping Henry Yesler establish his lumber mill and Peter Kirk's steel mill. Denny also served in government, first as postmaster in Seattle and later as the Washington Territory delegate to Congress.



Isaac Ebey ...

One of the earliest residents of Washington, Isaac Ebey arrived in Puget Sound in 1850. Ebey originally made his living as a farmer on Whibey Island. Ebey later became involved in territorial politics as both a lawyer and a member of the Territorial Legislature. As trade and commerce grew around Puget Sound, Ebey became a customs official, responsible for collecting fees and checking cargo. Ebey died on Whidbey Island in 1857 from a random Indian attack.



Peter Kirk ...

Peter Kirk was an English steel mill owner who came to Washington Territory in 1886. Kirk saw potential in the population and economic growth in Puget Sound. He also was excited by the easy access to coal and iron ore in the region. Kirk founded the town of Kirkland where he placed his steel mill. The mill never proved successful, but Kirk and his family remained in the town until his death.



Lizzie M. Ordway ...

Lizzie Ordway arrived in Seattle in 1864. She was part of a group known as the Mercer Girls, a party of eleven women who came to Washington Territory at the request of Seattle resident Asa Mercer. Most of the Mercer Girls went on to marry important local men. Ordway herself became the first teacher for the Seattle Public Schools and later the Superintendent of Schools for Kitsap County.



James Longmire ...

In 1853, James and Virinda Longmire departed their Indiana home and led dozens of pioneers across the Oregon Trail for Washington Territory. In this regard, they were no different than thousands of other settlers who had embarked on similar journeys. What made the Longmire party unique was their end destination. The Longmire pioneers intended to travel overland to the Puget Sound by crossing the Cascade Mountains. Typically most pioneers followed the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver and then journeyed north, thus by-passing the Cascades.

Before leaving Indiana, the Longmires were assured that the Territorial government was creating a trail in anticipation of their arrival and future pioneers. But when they arrived in Washington, no such trail was completed. Nevertheless they forged ahead, enduring many hardships on both sides of the mountains. After a difficult trek, they reached the Puget Sound and in doing so had established a new route for pioneers to travel across the Cascade Mountains.



Ezra Meeker ...

Today, the Oregon Trail is an historic monument and its entire route is filled with markers and memorials to the pioneers who traveled its length. But the trail may have faded into obscurity if not for the efforts of Ezra Meeker. Meeker crossed the Oregon Trail with his family on the way to Puyallup in 1853. After many years as a farmer, Meeker decided to spend his later years writing about the pioneers and the Oregon Trail. His efforts led to the erection of monuments and markers along the trail, as well as generating interest in preserving it for future generations.



Ben Snipes ...

Ben Snipes was one of Washington's earliest and most famous pioneers. He was a cattle rancher and herder. Snipes was known for his ability to transport large herds of cattle across long distances without losing a significant number of animals. This was no small feat in the American West where difficult terrain, bad weather, and cattle thieves made transportation difficult if not impossible. In 1859, Snipes brought the first cattle into Washington Territory, delivering a herd to gold mining camps in Washington and southern British Columbia. By 1864, Snipes managed 120,000 head of cattle in the territory.



Michael T. Simmons ...

In 1845, Michael T. Simmons, an American from Kentucky, established the first permanent American settlement in Western Washington at Tumwater along the Deschutes River. His settlement was much like a general store, with supplies and a saw mill. Simmons set himself up as a competitor to the Hudson's Bay Company, trading with Indians, travelers, and pioneers. When Washington became a territory in 1853, he became a postmaster and later an Indian agent who helped Isaac Stevens negotiate numerous treaties.



Henry Yesler ...

Henry Yesler arrived in Seattle in 1852. Yesler came to Seattle to establish a lumber mill. Beginning in 1853, Yesler's lumber mill became operational. For the next decade, the lumber mill was one of the most important industries in Puget Sound. Lumber from Yesler's mill was shipped all over the world, especially to California, and provided the materials for constructing many of Seattle's early buildings. Yesler's family joined him in Seattle in 1858. The Yesler family would become an important influence in the development of Seattle.

PIONEERS

Washington's Early Settlers

EARLY ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Whether a pioneer lived in a city or on a homestead, new immigrants to Washington had to contend with the local geography. Given the geographic challenges posed by Washington Territory, there were only a few economic activities that were profitable here during the 1850s and 1860s. These industries primarily revolved around the exploitation of natural resources, such as fish, minerals, and timber.

AGRICULTURE

As mentioned previously, the dense forest of Western Washington and harsh deserts of Eastern Washington posed a challenge to potential farmers and homesteaders in the 1850s and 1860s. This is not to say that there was no agricultural activity in Washington Territory. In fact, there was an abundance of farming. But most farming was aimed at producing goods for personal consumption. Any farming products left over were sold to local markets and rarely were shipped outside the territory.

There were two notable exceptions to this situation. First, there was a small, but healthy cattle ranching industry. The mountain pastures, dry shrub and grasslands of Eastern Washington provided grazing for beef cattle. These cattle provided meat for Washington Territory, Idaho Territory, Oregon, and parts of California. Cattle ranching was the first successful commercial agriculture activity in Washington Territory.

A second exception to the small agriculture industry in Washington was dryland farming. **Dryland farming** is the raising of crops without the benefit of irrigation for water. There are only a few crops that can be grown in dryland farming. In Washington Territory, the most important crop was wheat. Wheat was grown primarily in Eastern Washington, particularly in the southeast near Walla Walla.

QUICK FACT

OYSTERS

- Between 1851 and 1873, hundreds of workers dug and processed oysters in the tidal flats of Puget Sound, Hood Canal, and Willapa Bay. By 1873, individuals could own ten acre oyster beds which grew new varieties of oysters.

FISHING

One of the most successful early economic industries in Washington Territory was fishing. Washington enjoyed an abundance of coastal waters and marine life. Beginning in 1851, oysters were commercially harvested, packed, and sold from Shoalwater Bay.

In the 1860s, the development of canning revolutionized the salmon industry in Washington. After catching the salmon, ships returned to port to unload the catch at a **cannery**. Upon reaching the cannery, many workers cleaned the fish, cut it into small pieces, packed it into metal cans, sealed the cans, and then cooked the salmon. The canned salmon was packed in cases or boxes and then sent to market. Some fresh salmon was frozen and/or packed in ice to be shipped to markets as well. **Mechanical refrigeration** made it possible to buy fresh salmon for consumption.

The first commercial salmon cannery was built, owned, and operated by **William Hume** at Eagle Cliffs, which was located forty miles east of the mouth of the Columbia River. In 1866, the Hume Cannery produced 4,000 cases of salmon. Production increased in 1868 when 18,000 cases were shipped to markets in Oregon and California.

MINING

Gold was the most valuable mineral. In 1849, a large amount of gold was discovered in northern California east of Sacramento. The subsequent **California Gold Rush** attracted thousands of gold prospectors, miners, businessmen, laborers, and adventurers. During the 1850s and 1860s, many of these California miners drifted north into the Oregon Territory to look for gold and silver.

Between 1852 and 1855, gold was discovered in the Colville area in northeastern Washington Territory. A few miners went to Colville in 1855. These miners risked their lives because of the on-going Yakama Wars. These miners headed north to gold fields in the Fraser River Valley in British Columbia.

After the Indian Wars, gold was discovered in Idaho along the Clearwater River and Orofino Creek in 1860. Miners purchased their supplies in Walla Walla until 1861 when Lewiston, Idaho was founded at the junction of the Clearwater and Snake rivers.

Several small mining towns were founded during the gold rush years. Over a period of years, gold deposits were mined throughout Washington Territory. These gold mining areas included Swauk Creek, Wenatchee, Blewett, Pierce, Florence, and the Peshastin River.

FOCUS ON

Miners Working Conditions ...



▲ Roslyn coal miners.

Between 1859 and 1889, mining employed thousands of men in Washington. Miners worked long hours both above ground and underground in dark, cold tunnels. Mining was a dangerous job. Workers were frequently injured or killed by poisonous gases, explosions, fires, cave-ins, and other accidents. Miners who survived these obstacles still faced other health problems such as lung ailments and diseases like tuberculosis. In the 20th century, miners tried to improve their working conditions by forming unions which would cause conflict with mine owners.

Loggers Working Conditions ...



▲ A group of loggers at a logging camp in Washington.

During the period 1859 to 1889, the logging industry employed thousands of Washington residents. Logging during the the 19th century was grueling and difficult work. To reach the best quality wood, loggers spent months deep in the mountains and forests of Washington Territory. They lived in communal camps consisting of either tents or more permanent constructions such as cabins or dormitories. Logging camps were provided by timber companies, but run as cheaply as possible. Sanitation, toilet, and bathing facilities were minimal, creating substandard living conditions. Loggers risked injury and death cutting down trees, scaling large trees, and transporting logs to the mill.

TIMBER

In 1849, the California Gold Rush increased the demand for Washington's lumber and other wood products. Northern California gold mining operations required large amounts of lumber. In addition, the gold rush attracted thousands of miners and other people. **Boomtowns** and especially the cities of Sacramento and San Francisco grew rapidly. Washington's small lumber companies increased production for shipment to northern California's gold mining areas.

In 1853, **Henry Yesler** constructed Washington Territory's first steam powered sawmill in Seattle. The growth of Washington's timber industry was slowed during the period of 1855 to 1858 because of the territory's Yakama Indian Wars. Once peace and stability

was restored in 1860, the Puget Sound area became the site for twenty-five sawmills. Washington's lumber and wood products were shipped and sold in the Hawaiian Islands, Australia, China, East Asia, and the Pacific Rim.

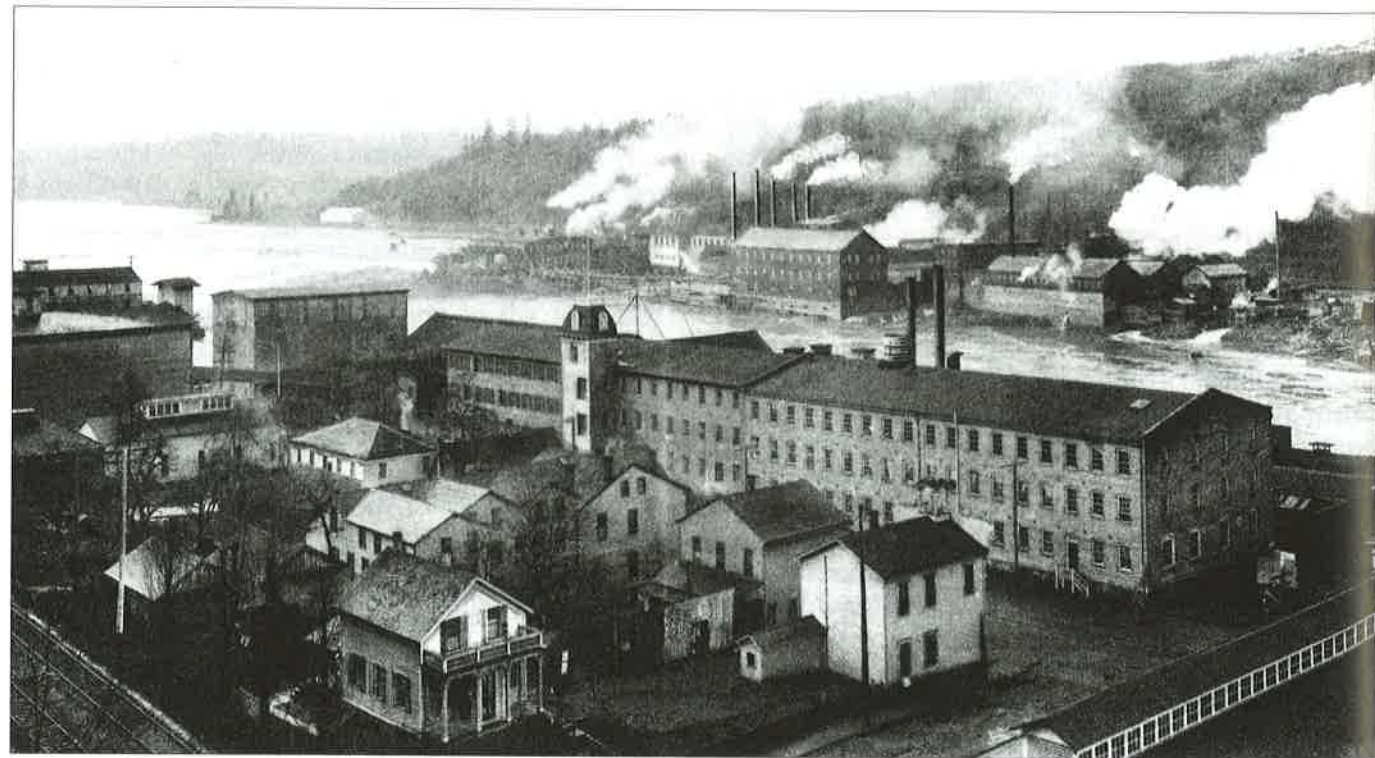
During the 1860s, Washington Territory's sawmills were producing greater quantities of lumber, pilings, railroad ties, shingles, and wooden spars. The expanding shipbuilding industry in Washington, California, China, Great Britain, France, and Spain needed the spars as well as lumber. Shingles were sold to China, Western Europe, and California. Washington's wood products were in demand on the East Coast of the United States, but it was very costly to sail around South America's Cape Hope to get to New York.

INDUSTRIALIZATION

Both the economy and population of Washington grew significantly during the 1850s and 1860s. Still, the territory trailed many western territories and states in terms of its economic development and population growth. However, between 1870 and 1889, the population grew from 23,955 people to 357,232.

The reason for this tremendous growth was not due to changes in Washington itself, but rather in the United States as a whole. During this period, the United States began a long period of rapid industrialization. **Industrialization** is a change in the way that goods are produced. In previous centuries, craftsmen produced goods by hand with tools. The process was slow and labor intensive. During industrialization, factories replaced craftsmen. The factories made goods faster and cheaper than people could. Factories in the United States created goods for people all over the country and the world.

Factories in the northeast United States were usually located in big cities, where there was access to shipping networks and a plentiful supply of workers. But factories also required raw materials to create their goods. In particular, minerals and lumber were in high demand. Washington, as well as other western regions, had these precious natural resources.



▲ The above image depicts a paper mill in Oregon City during the late 19th century. Factories, such as paper mills, became increasing common in the United States during this time.

Another byproduct of industrialization was immigration. Industrialization required a massive labor pool. Machines may have produced the goods in factories, but people were required to operate and feed the machines. In addition, more people were needed to harvest the natural resources that fed the factories. As a result of the increased demand for natural resources and factory workers, more people began to move to the United States from other parts of the world. Initially, these new people arrived in New York City or San Francisco, but it was not long before they moved to other parts of the country, including Washington Territory.

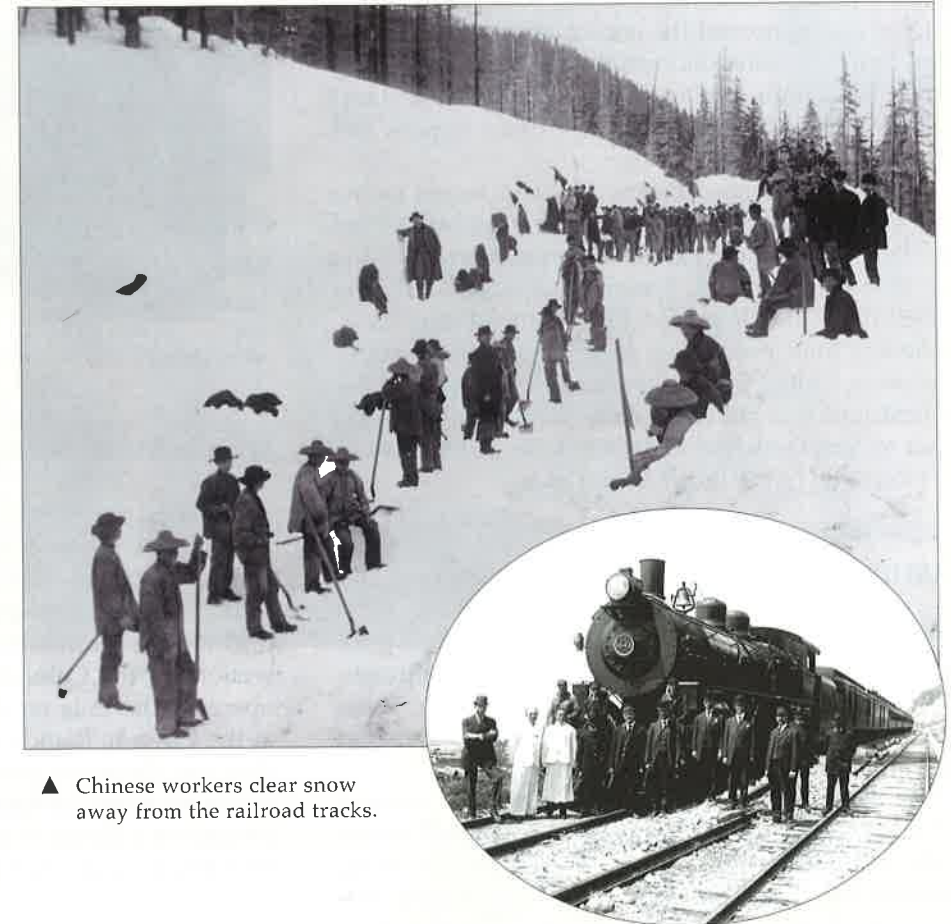
The problem was to get these natural resources and people quickly, efficiently, and affordably across the United States. Shipping by sea from West Coast ports, such as Seattle, was expensive and time consuming. However, it was still quicker than overland wagon trains.

To many national business leaders and politicians, the solution to this problem was railroads. Railroads were already used frequently in the eastern United States. The technology now existed to bring railroads to the American West. In 1862, Congress chartered the first transcontinental railroads, with the goal of linking the western and eastern halves of the United States.

CONNECTING TO AMERICAN HISTORY

Railroad Workers ...

The construction of transcontinental railroads across America was a difficult task. It required a great amount of money, supplies, and workers. Money and supplies proved easy to find. However, labor was more difficult. To meet the labor needs of the railroads, businesses turned to a variety of workers. Following the Civil War, many freed slaves worked on the railroads. In addition, workers from Europe, China, and Japan were brought to the United States to participate in the construction. After completing the railroads, many of these foreign workers settled in Washington and contributed to the growing diversity of the region.

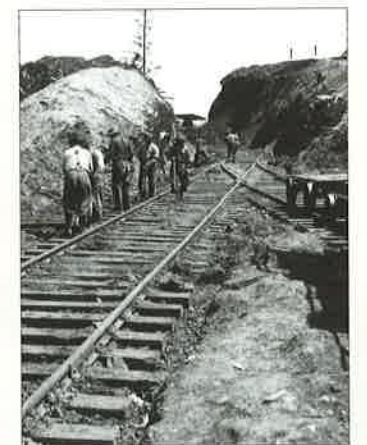


▲ Chinese workers clear snow away from the railroad tracks.



▲ Construction of the Mosquito Creek Railroad.

▲ Once completed, railroads transported freight and passengers to Washington.



▲ Railroad workers laying new railroad tracks.

THE CENTRAL PACIFIC AND UNION PACIFIC RAILROADS

The 1862 **Railroad Act** and the 1864 **Railway Act** chartered and approved the construction of the United States' first two transcontinental railroads, the **Central Pacific** and **Union Pacific**. They were to be a direct link between the Midwest and East Coast regions and northern California.

In 1863, the Central Pacific Railroad began laying tracks heading east from Sacramento, California. Two years later, the Union Pacific Railroad started laying track moving west from Omaha, Nebraska. On May 10, 1869 the railroads met at **Promontory Point**, Utah. For the first time, people and freight could move across the western United States. San Francisco was the major beneficiary of this rail line. Many individuals traveled by rail to San Francisco and then took ships north to either Portland or the Puget Sound area.

WASHINGTON'S FIRST RAILROADS

Small railroads already existed in Washington prior to the chartering of the first transcontinental railroads. The first were located along the Columbia River. These railroads were quite small and existed only to transport goods around rapids on the Columbia.

The first rapids were located near the western entrance to the Columbia Gorge, and called the Cascade Rapids. To by-pass these rapids, a short railway of six miles was constructed for passengers and freight. The second rapids were at Celilo Falls, near The Dalles on the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains. Once again a small railroad of fourteen miles was used to by-pass the rapids.



▲ Columbia River Railroad Bridge at Celilo Falls.



▲ Spokane International Railroad Cars.

Oregon Steam Navigation Company

Several prominent Portland businessmen formed the **Oregon Steam Navigation Company** in 1860. The company gained control of all passenger and freight traffic on the Columbia River. The company owned and operated 26 stern-wheelers on the lower and middle sections of the Columbia River. They also owned and operated the rails on the two major portage locations at the Cascade Rapids and The Dalles. Each year more than ten thousand passengers and ten thousand tons of freight were transported by the company. In 1879, a prominent railroad tycoon, **Henry Villard**, purchased the Oregon Steam Navigation Company.

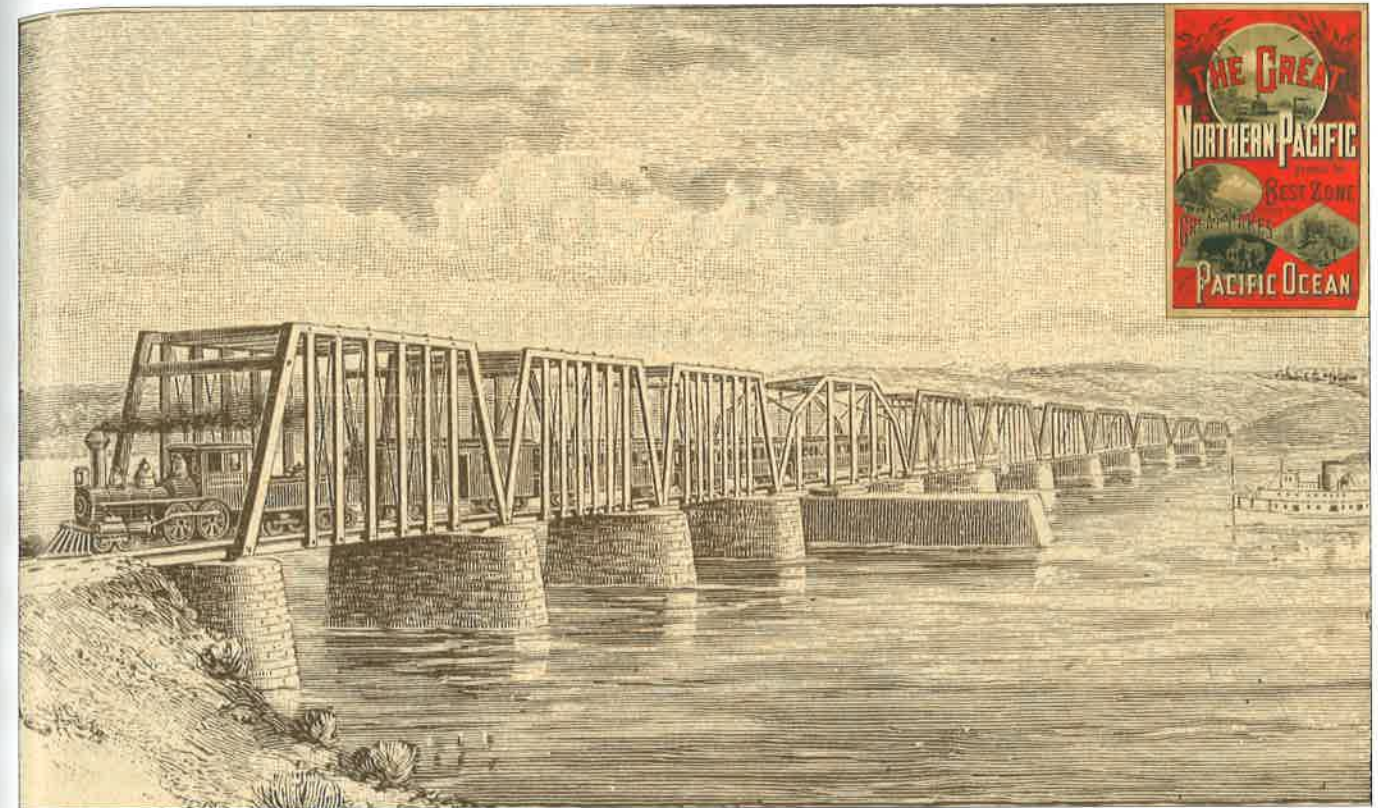
Walla Walla and Columbia River Railroad

The Walla Walla and Palouse Hills regions were very fertile farming areas in the 1860s and 1870s. During the same time period the gold rush in Idaho was underway. A Walla Walla businessman, **Dr. Dorsey Baker** financed the construction of a railroad from Wallula on the Columbia River to the city of Walla Walla.

The rail line carried gold from Idaho mines to markets in Portland and brought valuable supplies from Walla Walla to western Idaho mining towns. In 1879, Baker sold a majority of his stock to the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. In 1880, Henry Villard purchased the remaining portion of Baker's stock.

Oregon Railway and Navigation Company

In 1880, Henry Villard reorganized his railroad and shipping companies. The **Oregon Railway and Navigation Company** owned 643 miles of railroads in



▲ Northern Pacific Railroad Bridge at Pasco.

Washington and Oregon. Villard had established a virtual monopoly on the movement of freight and passengers along the Columbia River.

Northern Pacific Railroad

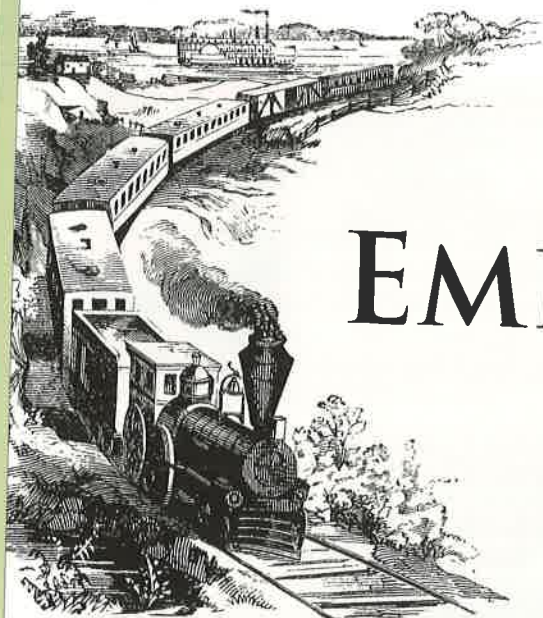
In 1864, Congress chartered the **Northern Pacific Railroad**. In 1864, the Railway Act provided incentives for railroad investors. The Northern Pacific Railroad was to be built from Duluth, Minnesota to Tacoma, Washington. Railroad tycoon **Jay Cooke** was to build the railroad.

Jay Cooke only partially completed two sections of the proposed transcontinental railroad before he went bankrupt in 1873. One completed section was between Duluth, Minnesota and Bismarck, North Dakota. The other section, between Kalama on the Columbia River and Tacoma, was only partially finished and was not completed until 1879.

Henry Villard gained control of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1881. He financed the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad by September 8, 1883. However, Villard changed the final destination of the line to Portland instead of Tacoma. He did so to better utilize his existing railroads in Washington and Oregon. Later, the Northern Pacific Railroad created a branch line from Yakima to Tacoma, thus completing the original route.



▲ Officers of the Northern Pacific Railroad - Henry Villard is located in the center.



AMERICAN EMPIRE BUILDERS

Barons of the West

The first railroads appeared in the eastern United States during the 1820s. These early railroads were slow and expensive to construct. But by 1870, railroads spread throughout the country. Railroads revolutionized America, making the movement of people and goods faster than ever. For the first time in history, the United States felt like a unified country. In addition, the railroads created a new class of incredibly rich and powerful men. These railroad owners, Jay Cooke, Leland Stanford, Henry Villard, and James Hill were among the wealthiest men in American history.



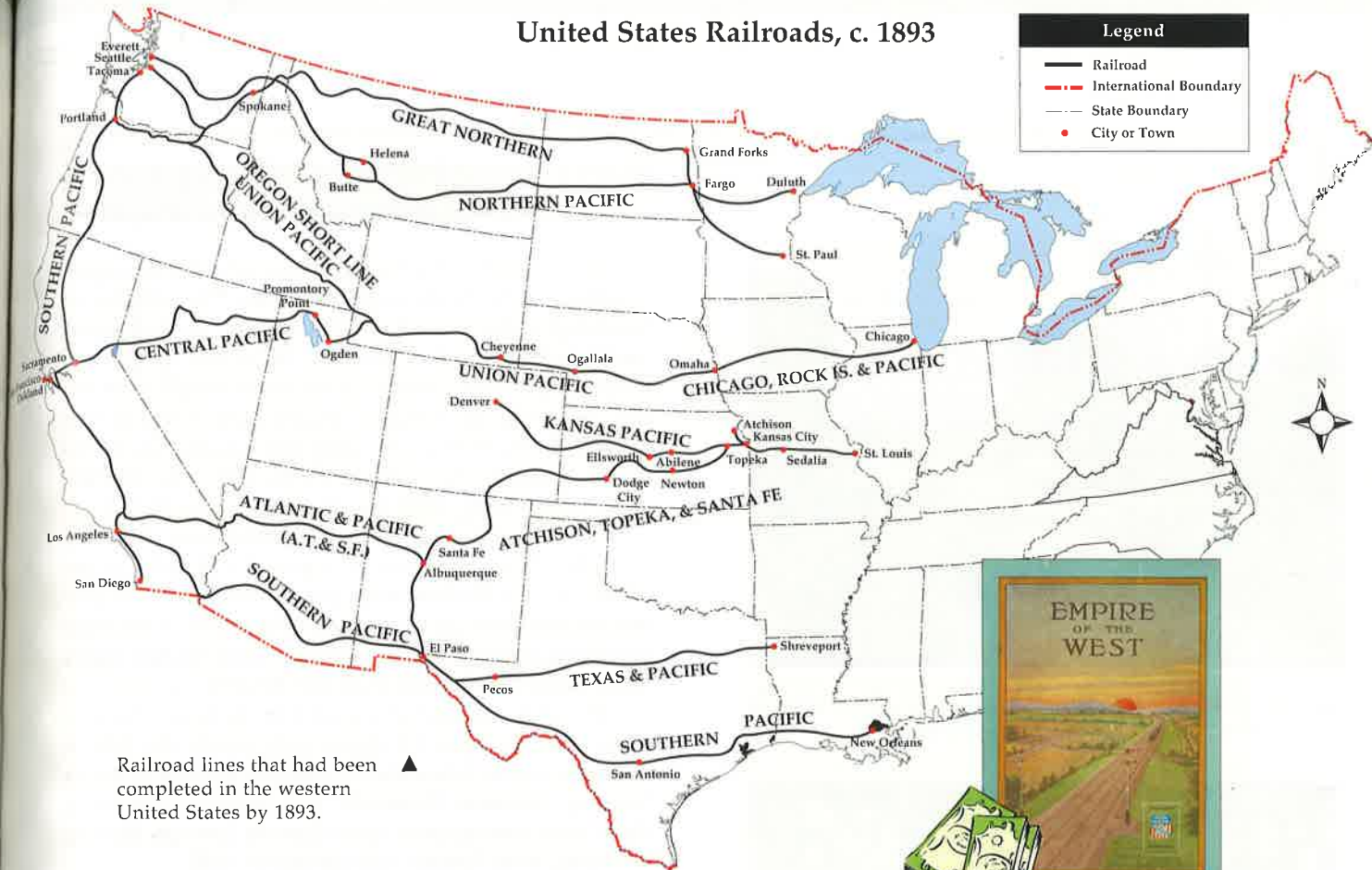
JAY COOKE
(1821-1905)

The financier and owner of the Northern Pacific Railway from 1863-1873. Cooke went bankrupt during the Panic of 1873 and sold the railroad to Henry Villard. Cooke later made a fortune in silver mining.

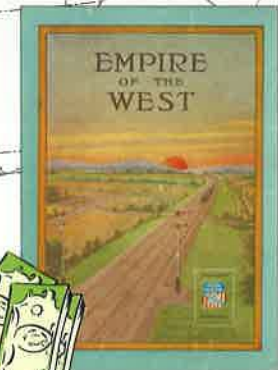


LELAND STANFORD
(1842-1893)

The owner and President of the Central and Southern Pacific railroads. Stanford was also a governor of California (1861-1863) and United States Senator (1885-1893). He founded Stanford University in 1891 with a \$30,000,000 grant.

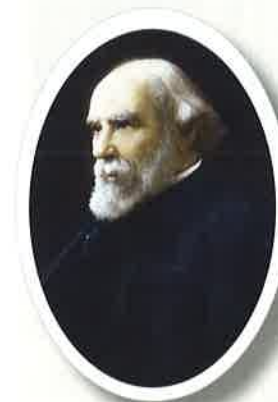


Railroad lines that had been completed in the western United States by 1893.



HENRY VILLARD
(1835-1900)

A German immigrant, Villard began his life in America as a poor man doing entry-level jobs. After acquiring investors, Villard purchased many transportation companies. These included the Kansas-Pacific Railroad, Oregon Steam Navigation Company, the Walla-Walla-Columbia River Railroad, and the Northern Pacific Railroad. He had a virtual monopoly on trade and transportation along the Columbia River.



JAMES J. HILL
(1838-1916)

Railroad tycoon and financier of the Great Northern Railroad. He was known as the "Empire Builder" in the northern United States. Hill built his railroad without the benefit of governmental grants. The Great Northern Railroad gained business by charging low freight rates and free passage for settlers going west.





▲ Most new residents to Washington Territory in the 1870s and 1880s settled in cities such as Seattle.



▲ Immigrants from Europe, such as those pictured above, entered the United States through Ellis Island in New York City.



▲ While there were numerous ethnic groups in Washington Territory, the majority of residents were white like these railroad workers.

POPULATION IMPACT OF RAILROADS

The impact of the transcontinental railroads upon Washington Territory was enormous. The journey to Washington Territory from the eastern United States took weeks instead of months. Moreover, people no longer needed the massive amounts of supplies for the trip, thus making travel to Washington Territory less expensive. In 1870, a year after the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, Washington's population grew to 23,955. By 1880, the population was 73,116.

The population growth in Washington Territory brought about a greater diversity of people in the region. In fact, Washington's population was so diverse that by 1890, one-quarter of the population in the state was born outside of the country. Only twelve states had a higher percentage than Washington.

By far the largest group of foreign-born residents came from Europe. Of these individuals the largest numbers came from the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. However, there were immigrants from Eastern Europe, Russia, Germany, Italy, Greece, and Ireland as well.

In addition to people of European descent, there was also a significant Chinese population in Washington Territory. Many of these immigrants had worked in the gold fields of California and Idaho, as well as on the construction of the transcontinental railroads. When employment slowed in these areas, they migrated to Washington, looking for new opportunities.

Finally, there were also small communities of Japanese and Filipino descent living in Washington during the 1870s and 1880s. These populations were quite small at the time, but they would grow significantly in subsequent decades.

SOCIAL TENSIONS

Inevitably, the influx of new arrivals created tensions in Washington Territory. In general, people of European descent had an easier time finding a place in Washington society. People of color, such as Japanese, Filipinos, and African-Americans faced a larger challenge and often discrimination. The same racial attitudes about cultural superiority that contributed to the persecution of the Indians played a role in the treatment of non-white immigrants. The Chinese in particular faced strong discrimination and resentment.

Chinese immigrants first came to Washington during the 1870s to work in the region's growing salmon canning industry. Large numbers of

FOCUS ON

Bailey Gatzert ...



In 1875, **Bailey Gatzert** became the first Jewish mayor of Seattle and one of the first Jewish mayors in the history of the United States. His election is unique given that anti-Semitism, discrimination against people of Jewish descent, was quite common and widespread throughout America. Prior to serving as mayor, Gatzert was a respected local businessman. He operated Schwabacher & Bros. Store in Seattle. Following his term as mayor, Gatzert remained an important voice in the development of Seattle.

Chinese immigrants had been in the United States since the 1850s. Originally, many Chinese came to work in the gold fields of California or on the transcontinental railroads. In fact, the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869 left many Chinese workers unemployed and they came to Washington seeking new jobs in the canneries.

Life in the canneries was difficult. Cannery workers labored long hours for low pay in poor working conditions. At first, Chinese laborers worked alongside whites and American Indians in the canneries. Gradually, though, Chinese workers became the majority in the canneries. Chinese immigrants also found employment in other fields such as agriculture. Eventually, many people throughout the United States began to resent the presence of Chinese immigrants. These people believed that the Chinese were taking jobs from Americans. As a result of this public outcry, Congress passed the **Chinese Exclusion Act** in 1882, which forbade new immigrants from coming into the United States from China.

The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act did not ease tensions. The Chinese already in the country experienced severe discrimination and prejudice. Anti-Chinese clubs began to form all over the United States, including Washington. In 1885, a group of whites shot and killed three Chinese hop-pickers near Issaquah.

In the same year, an anti-Chinese Congress in Seattle demanded that all Chinese leave Washington before November 1. Six hundred Chinese immediately left for Portland. Those Chinese who remained in Washington faced the possibility of violence. On February 7, 1886, the Washington Home Guard had to protect 350 Chinese immigrants as they awaited a boat to take them back to China.

GREAT
ANTI-CHINESE
Mass Meeting!
WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 3rd, 1885,
8 O'CLOCK P. M.
AT ALPHA OPERA HOUSE.

ABLE SPEAKERS

Will address the citizens of Tacoma on the Chinese question. Also the Committee on the habits and modes of living of the Chinese will make a full report of their labor, and submit a plan of organization for the action of the citizens.

The time has come for action. Delay is weakness, unpardonable sin against our lives, our families, society and mankind. Action, decided action, re-
direction, salvation. Therefore come all, come everyone, and protest against this life and
soul-destroying curse. This will be the people's meeting, who should not be hiding while
Rome is burning.
By order of the
Anti-Chinese Committee.

▲ A poster encouraging the residents of Tacoma to attend an anti-Chinese rally.

THE CHINESE

CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT

The **Chinese Exclusion Act** of 1882 and the subsequent **ant-Chinese riots** of 1886 reveal the contradictory attitudes of Americans towards immigrants. Immigrants were desperately needed to feed the factories and expanding economy. Yet many Americans looked down upon immigrants, especially people from Ireland, Italy, Eastern Europe, and Asia. Immigrants from these areas were seen as inferior to those from Western Europe, Northern Europe, and Great Britain. In spite of these prejudices, the Chinese were the only people specifically targeted for exclusion and deportation during the late 19th century.



▲ A Chinese couple from Washington.



▲ November 3, 1885 - Tacoma's "Twenty-Seven" was a group of 27 citizens that led a mob forcing the Chinese from their homes.



▲ Chinese miners in a mine.



▲ Chinese immigrant family.



▲ Chinese workers in a cannery.

TO THE CITIZENS OF TACOMA.

Fellow Citizens:

The deep feeling and agitation against the presence of the Chinese in our midst culminated in a general conference of five counties on Puget Sound, and under the advice of said conference organizations were perfected to carry into effect the recommendations promulgated. The conference recommended the formation of local committees, whose duty it should be to call upon all persons employing Chinese to dispense with their services, and to cancel all business or other relations with these people, thus practically discouraging their presence here. This method was considered the simplest, easiest and most effective mode to accomplish a complete and peaceable solution of this important problem. In obedience to the will of the people thus expressed, we appear as the committee of your choice to assist in carrying into effect this measure, and make the following request: That you will discharge any and all Chinese in your employ, **not later than Nov. First, 1885**, and that you will not hereafter employ them or encourage their presence here. In this proceeding and request we are guided only by a sense of duty and feeling toward our fellow men, firmly believing that calm counsel will declare for this simple, reasonable and effective method, thereby allaying the present state of excited feeling and excitement, ending all agitation and restoring confidence and good feeling in our community.

Tacoma, October 8th, 1885.

J. P. CHILBERG, Chairman,
H. C. PATRICK,
M. KAUFMAN,
E. G. BACON,
JACOB RALPH,

MEYER KAUFMAN,
JOHN N. FULLER,
JOHN FORBES,
W. G. ROWLAND,
M. F. BROWN,

J. A. MCGOULDRIK,
W. CHRISTIE,
A. U. MILLS,
S. F. SAHMS,
JAS. WICKERHAM,

Committee

▲ The above is a flier from an anti-Chinese committee in Tacoma encouraging employers to fire Chinese workers. The club hoped to discourage Chinese from living in Tacoma by taking away their employment and forcing them to leave in search of other jobs.



▲ This is a poster for an anti-Chinese rally in Tacoma.



▲ The painting above illustrates the anti-Chinese riots of 1886 in Seattle.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RAILROADS

Trains not only had an impact on immigration, but the economy as well. Trains granted Washington Territory fast, efficient, and affordable access to the markets of the eastern United States. Not only did this help existing economic activities and industries but also opened the possibilities for new ventures.

AGRICULTURE

Commercial farming began to flourish, especially in Eastern Washington. Commercial farmers in Eastern Washington could be divided into three categories: dryland farmers, irrigation farmers, and ranchers.

Dryland farmers in the Palouse Hills and Columbia Basin produced wheat, barley, oats, and hay without irrigation. In the Columbia, Yakima, Wenatchee, Okanogan, and Walla Walla river valleys, the **irrigation farmers** used irrigation water to raise fruits and vegetables. **Ranchers** needed the grazing lands of the foothills of the Okanogan Highlands, Blue Mountains, Cascade Mountains, and Rocky Mountains to raise cattle, horses, and sheep. While ranching remained an important agricultural activity, the spread of irrigation and dryland farming brought about a decline in ranching.

One of the most important early commercial crops in Washington was hops. Hops are the key ingredient in the production of beer. The first hop farms were located in Western Washington, primarily in the White River Valley and around Olympia. Hops were big business and Washington hops were exported all over the world. Some Washington hop farmers even operated warehouses overseas, in places like London, to sell their crops to European beer makers.

FOCUS ON



In 1877, Congress passed the Desert Land Act. The law gave 640 acres of land free to any person who would irrigate it for three years. The Desert Land act was designed to promote agriculture and the development of irrigation systems in the western United States including Washington. While developing irrigation in Washington Territory, especially the eastern region, was difficult, many people took advantage of the opportunity for free land.

◀ A Yakima Valley farmer planting crops.

FISHING

Commercial fishing continued to be a prominent economic activity in Washington Territory. In fact, the presence of railroads only made it more profitable. By 1881, there were 35 canneries near the Columbia River, but only two in the Puget Sound area near present-day Mukilteo. By 1895, over 634,000 cases were produced on the Columbia River. However, production changed as the Puget Sound canneries became dominant by 1900. The Hume brothers operated nearly half of all the salmon canneries. Robert Hume expanded the fresh and canned salmon markets to the eastern United States, Australia, South America, and Western Europe, especially Great Britain.

Salmon canneries in Washington during the 1880s employed thousands of workers. The canning industry employed hundreds of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and American Indian workers. They worked long hours in dirty conditions for very low wages.

Salmon canneries were popular and important during this time due to a lack of refrigeration. Fresh fish can spoil fast. But canned salmon is cooked and preserved, allowing it to sit for days, weeks, and months before it reaches the consumer. Since refrigerators were not part of everyday homes and only the wealthy had access to massive amounts of ice, canned fish was in high demand as the most practical method for providing fish to markets without access to seafood.

MINING

The mining industry also grew as a result of railroads and population growth. While gold remained important, other minerals were exploited. In 1875, a large deposit of coal was discovered in the Puyallup River area near Carbonado in eastern Pierce County. Additional coal

FOCUS ON



Scandinavian Immigrants ...

The growth of the agriculture, fishing, and timber industries in Washington attracted thousands of Scandinavians to the region. Scandinavians are people who come from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland in Northern Europe. Many of these immigrants came directly from Europe. However, most of the immigrants were simply of Scandinavian descent and came from the Northeast and Upper Midwest regions of the United States. Once here, Scandinavians typically found employment as dairy farmers, fishers, and loggers. Scandinavians have had a deep cultural impact on Washington, especially in Western Washington. Their legacy can be seen in the numerous Scandinavian festivals celebrated in the state as well as the presence of many heritage organizations.

deposits were located in the Chehalis-Centralia areas in the early 1880s. In 1885, a very significant coal field was the Ravensdale-Franklin-Black Diamond deposits. In the same year, the Roslyn-Cle Elum coal mines began operation on the eastern side of Snoqualmie Pass in the Kittitas Valley. During the 1890s, other new coal deposits were developed in the Bellingham area of Whatcom County. Coal was an important energy resource for residents living in Washington during the 1880s and 1890s.

In the 1880s, miners discovered major silver, zinc, and lead deposits in the Coeur d'Alene District in northern Idaho. Of these, silver was the most valuable mineral. The Sunshine, Bunker Hill, and Sullivan silver mines of northern Idaho produced tremendous quantities of silver, lead, and zinc. The rush of miners to the Coeur d'Alene District (Wallace, Wardner, Kellogg, and Mullan) sparked an economic boom for the city of Spokane. Spokane grew rapidly as a major supplier of food, tools, equipment, and machinery related to the booming mining activities in the panhandle of Idaho.

TIMBER

The railroads also helped the growth of the timber industry. By the end of the 1870s, Washington Territory's lumber production had increased to 128,000,000 board feet annually. Major sawmills were operating in Seattle, Tacoma, Port Gamble, Port Madison, Port Blakely, and many other communities in the Puget Sound area. In Eastern Washington, the small city of Spokane had several sawmills.

The lumber industry was responsible for 80 percent of Washington Territory's total manufacturing income from 1860 to 1880. In 1880, Washington Territory ranked 31st among the territories and states of the United States in lumber production. In 1889, Washington's 310 sawmills were producing in excess of one billion board feet of lumber annually.



▲ Indian hop pickers in the White River Valley.



▲ Transporting shingles on a cross-plank road.

FOCUS ON

The Dawes Act ...



▲ Chief Moses' home on the Colville Reservation in Nespelem, Washington.

By the 1880s, Washington's major Indian tribes were settled on reservations. A reservation was land set aside by the United States government specifically for Indian tribes. Reservations were not under the control of states such as Washington. Instead, the federal government had promised the tribes that these lands would be areas where Indians could practice their culture and customs under traditional tribal rule without outside interference. In reality, the federal government had ultimate authority over a reservation.

Even though the amount of land in a reservation was very small in comparison to the land owned by whites, some people resented Indian ownership of this land. There were many businessmen and developers who wanted this land and they lobbied Congress to open up reservations to private ownership. In 1887, without consulting any Indian leaders, Congress yielded to these demands and passed the Dawes Act. According to the Dawes Act every Indian on a reservation was given a small piece of the land as private, rather than tribal, property. The remaining land was then sold to non-Indians. In addition, non-Indians could now purchase reservation land from Indians. Between 1887 and 1934, over 100 million acres of reservation land was taken from Indians across the country. In Washington, all reservations lost land, but the Yakama, Colville, and Spokane reservations were amongst the hardest hit. Reservation land was opened to mining, farming, railroads and other forms of development. Tribal leaders were outraged, but there was little that they could do.

STATEHOOD

The residents of the Washington Territory waited thirty-six years for statehood. Washington Territory existed from March 2, 1853 to November 11, 1889. The primary reasons for the long delay of statehood were the slow development of the territory's economy and the very slow growth of the territory's total population. From 1853 to 1870, Washington's total population did not exceed the 60,000 people required to apply for statehood by the 1787 Northwest Ordinance. In 1870, Congress increased the minimum population requirement to 125,000 people.

Residents of Washington were very eager to achieve statehood. The collective desire for statehood by the territorial population was the result of several factors. Statehood conferred a certain status, indicating that Washington and its residents were equal members of the United States. From a practical standpoint, statehood opened enormous possibilities. Becoming a state would give Washington a voice in Congress. This in turn would allow Washington representatives to support legislation and secure funding beneficial to Washington residents and the economy. Thus, in 1878, Washington residents convened a state constitutional convention even though Congress had not authorized them to do so.

In the summer of 1878, fifteen delegates met in Walla Walla to write a constitution. In October, the voters in Washington Territory passed the proposed state constitution by a vote of 6,462 to 3,231. Congress did not act on Washington's proposed constitution or statehood status because Washington's population of 75,000 did not meet the minimum requirement of 125,000 people.

During the 1880s, Washington's economy and population grew at a very fast pace, especially after the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883. As a whole, the entire population of Washington increased by 95,000 people from 1887-1889. By 1889, Washington's territorial population was more than 300,000 residents. On February 22, 1889, Congress passed the **Omnibus Bill**. The Omnibus Bill was an enabling act allowing Washington to hold a constitutional convention in the summer.

Seventy-five constitutional convention delegates were elected on May 4, 1889. These delegates represented a cross section of the territory's population, geographical regions, and many vocations. Politically, 43 Republicans, 29 Democrats, and three Independents were elected.

The **Constitutional Convention** was held in Olympia. The convention began on July 4, 1889. The second **Washington State Constitution** was completed during these summer months. The voters in Washington Territory overwhelmingly passed the new constitution on October 1, 1889. After a close review, **President Benjamin Harrison** signed the Omnibus Bill admitting the state of Washington as the 42nd state to the Union on November 11, 1889. The thirty-six year wait was finally over for the residents of Washington Territory.

FOCUS ON

Journey to Statehood ...

When Washington was granted statehood on November 11, 1889, it was the end of a long story that began at the start of the 1800s. From 1803 until 1818, Washington was part of the Oregon Country, a vast unorganized region that included Washington, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia, and parts of western Montana and Wyoming. The Oregon Country was claimed by Russia, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States. In 1818, Russia and Spain had all but given up their claims and the United States and Great Britain signed a joint occupation agreement, whereby residents of both countries could legally settle in Oregon Country. Joint occupation remained the official international situation of Oregon Country until the signing of the Treaty of Oregon in 1846. The Treaty of Oregon granted the United States all territory in Oregon Country south of the 49th parallel.

Once officially a part of the United States, Oregon Country was organized into Oregon Territory in 1848. Oregon Territory was so large that the United States decided to divide it, creating Washington Territory and Oregon Territory in 1853. In 1859, Oregon became a state. In 1863, Idaho Territory was partitioned from Washington Territory. The final change came in 1889, when Washington became the 42nd state in the union.



Oregon Country and Joint Occupation, 1818



Treaty of Oregon and the United States Claim, 1846



Oregon Territory, 1848



Washington Territory and Oregon Territory, 1853



Washington Territory and Oregon Statehood, 1859



Washington Territory, Oregon State, and Idaho Territory, 1863



Washington State, Oregon State, and Idaho Territory, 1889

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The period between 1859 and 1889 brought enormous change to Washington. The era began with Washington Territory as a remote and isolated part of the United States. Popular imagination believed the region to be a land of wilderness and Indians. But the reality of Washington Territory was much different. Treaties and wars had placed most Indians on reservations, clearing the land for white settlement. At first the population growth was slow, but with the advent of the transcontinental railroads and the demands of an industrial economy, people flocked to the state.

The majority of people who came to Washington Territory were white Americans. But a substantial portion of the population was foreign born and of these a significant number came from China, Japan, and the Philippines. The arrival of new people to Washington Territory brought about statehood, but also introduced cultural and social diversity to the region. In addition, the immigrants created new economic opportunities. The impact of these social, cultural, and economic changes would define Washington in the subsequent decades.