

NATION: Building the Railroad

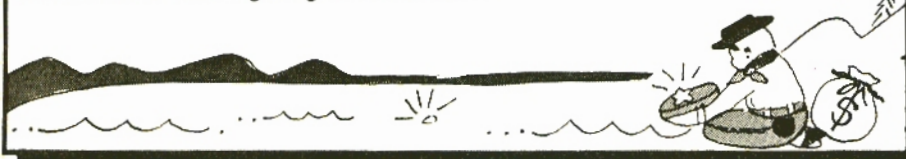
Golden Spike Ties Together East and West

Settling the Great Plains: What is making it easier to move West now.

TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD CONNECTS THE U.S.: People can move West on the new railroad. They can also trade with the East.



SECOND GOLD RUSH: More gold is being found in the West. Gold-seekers are rushing to get some of it.



GROWING MARKET FOR CATTLE: People in the East want to buy beef. Settlers can raise big herds of cattle on the prairie grass.



BETTER FARM MACHINERY: Plows and reapers let settlers farm large fields on the prairie.



INDIANS MOVED—NO LONGER A THREAT: The U.S. government has moved Indians to reservations. Settlers do not have to fight them. They can have the Indians' land.



Territories:
What: Land areas in the U.S. that have been settled but are not yet states.
Where: The Great Plains and the Southwest.
Why settlers are going there: To get land owned by the U.S. government. When there are enough people living in a territory (60,000), it can become a state.

- Need 5,000 free males to become a territory.
- Need 60,000 free people to become a state.



The Great Plains:
What: Large, flat lands with few trees, short grass, and little rainfall.
Where: In middle America, from Texas to Canada and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.
Why settlers are going there: To get the only land not yet settled in America. People have already settled the East Coast and the West Coast.

Promontory, Utah, 1869

Workers today drove a golden spike into the last tie of the first railroad to join the eastern U.S. with the western U.S.—the Transcontinental Railroad.

Work on the railroad began in 1866. The Union Pacific Company worked west from Omaha, Nebraska. The Central Pacific Company worked east from Sacramento, California.

These companies had to build the railroad through deserts and mountains. They had few machines—only men to do the work. The Union Pacific hired many Irish immigrants. The Central Pacific hired many Chinese immigrants.

Many of these immigrants now will settle in the West. The railroad will bring many other people to settle there.

Now it will take only a week for the railroad to carry letters and newspapers between East and West. It used to take months.

Before the railroad was finished, there were only two ways to send a message fast:

- By **Pony Express** (1860-61).
- By **telegraph** (after 1861).

Gold Find Splits U.S., Sioux Indians

Black Hills, South Dakota, 1877

Gold miners have won. They can go on looking for **Black Hills** gold on the Indian reservation. The Sioux Indians have been trying to drive out the miners since gold was found there in 1874. But the Indians have lost their reservation to the white miners.

Gold drew miners to other parts of America before this:

- Nevada in 1858—for both the gold and silver in the rich **Comstock Lode**.
- Colorado in 1859—to **Pike's Peak**. They carried signs saying, "**Pike's Peak or Bust!**"

PEOPLE: Indians

Indian Wars End: Whites Win the Plains

Wounded Knee, South Dakota, 1890

Over 200 Sioux men, women, and children are dead at **Wounded Knee**. The U.S. Army opened fire on the unarmed Indians. The Army says this should put an end to all Indian fighting in the U.S.

Wars between Indians and

white settlers have been going on for over 100 years. The Indians started fighting settlers over land. Settlers wanted to own their own land. Indians wanted land to be shared by all. But the Indians lost the fight to keep the land open for all to use. The Indians lost because:

- There were many more set-

tlers than Indians by the end of the 1800s.

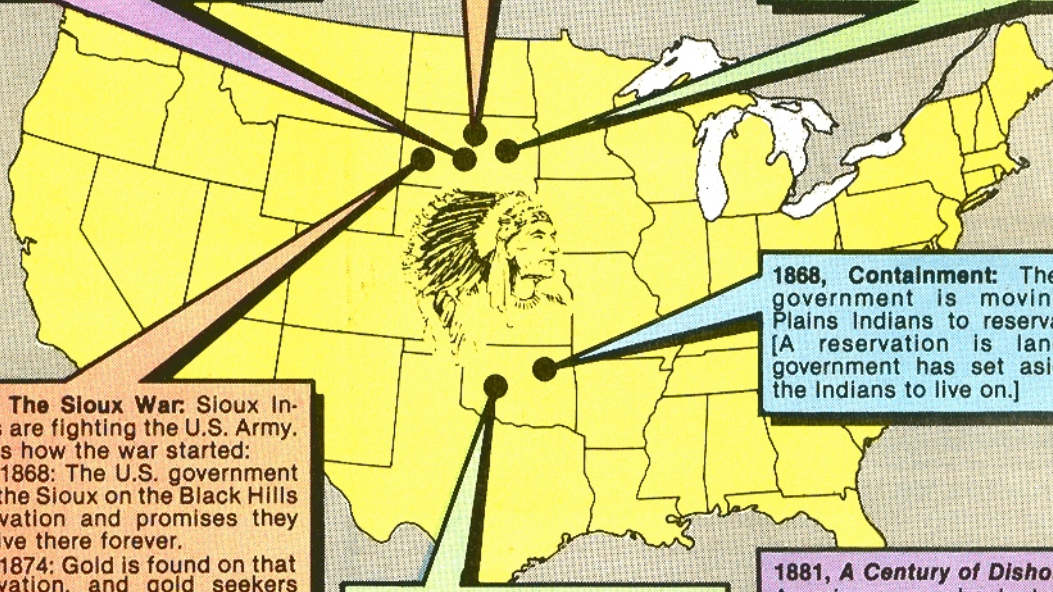
■ The settlers and the railroads killed the buffalo. Indians used the buffalo for food, clothes, and shelter.

■ The government sent the Army with guns to fight the Indians without guns.

June 1876, The Battle of Little Bighorn: Sioux Indians have won the battle at the Little Bighorn River. They have killed U.S. General George Custer and his 264 men. This bloody battle is being called "Custer's Last Stand."

1877: Chief Crazy Horse, a Sioux leader at the Battle of Little Bighorn, surrenders to the U.S. Army.

1890: Chief Sitting Bull, a Sioux leader at the Battle of Little Bighorn, has been shot and killed by the U.S. Army. He was shot because he disobeyed a government order to stop his people from doing the ghost dance. This is a religious dance that scares white Americans.



1877, The Sioux War: Sioux Indians are fighting the U.S. Army. Here's how the war started:

■ 1868: The U.S. government puts the Sioux on the Black Hills reservation and promises they can live there forever.

■ 1874: Gold is found on that reservation, and gold seekers come from all over.

■ 1876: The Sioux try to make gold seekers leave. When the government won't help them, the Sioux fight.

■ 1877: The Army beats the Sioux. The gold miners stay on the reservation.

1889, Oklahoma Becomes a Territory: In just a few hours, enough settlers have come to Oklahoma to make it a territory [5,000 free men]. They came when the government opened the Indian reservation to white settlers.

1868, Containment: The U.S. government is moving the Plains Indians to reservations. [A reservation is land the government has set aside for the Indians to live on.]

1881, A Century of Dishonor: Americans are shocked at what they have done to Indians. In her book, **Helen Hunt Jackson** told:
 ■ How settlers stole Indians' lands.
 ■ How the government broke most of its promises to the Indians.

Dawes Act Waves Magic Wand to Turn Indians Into Americans

Washington, D.C., 1887

Americanization is the best way to take care of Indians, Congress says. [Americanization means getting the Indians to live like white Americans.]

Congress' latest Indian law, the **Dawes Act**, says:

- The head of each Indian

family can have 160 acres of reservation land to own.

■ Indians can become U.S. citizens if they farm the land and take up white settlers' ways.

In the Dawes Act, Congress shows that it does not understand Indians or their problems.

The Indians do:

- Believe a group, not one person, should own land.

The Indians do not:

- Have good land for farming on the reservations.
- Have farm tools.
- Know how to farm.

NATION: Cow Towns

Railroads Bring "\$4 Cow and \$40 Market" Together

Trade in the West

CHISHOLM TRAIL: A long cow path from San Antonio, Texas, north to Abilene, Kansas. Cowboys use the Chisholm Trail to drive cattle from the open range to the cow town. There the cattle are shipped on the railroad to markets in the East.

COW TOWNS: Towns that have grown up along the railroads. Ranchers bring cattle to cow towns to be sold and shipped to markets. **Abilene, Dodge City, and Wichita** are cow towns in Kansas.

TEXAS LONGHORNS: Beef cattle with long horns and strong bodies. Longhorns feed on prairie grasses. They are raised in Texas on open range [land with no fences].



War on the Range—Over Land No One Wanted



In the Range War

The Sides:

Cattle ranchers want to keep the prairie grasses and the open range.

Sheep ranchers want to keep the prairie grasses and fence the range.

Farmers want to plow up the grass and fence the range.

The Plan:

Each side tries to drive the others off the range by tricks: tearing down fences; poisoning water.

The Score:

Farmers and fences win.

Abilene, Kansas, 1882

People in the East want beef—and railroads are bringing beef from western ranches to them.

"**Cow towns**" have grown up at points where railroads pick up western cattle for eastern markets.

Abilene, Kansas, was the first cow town. J. G. McCoy had a cattle yard near Abilene. In 1867, he got the railroad to agree to give ranchers low shipping rates for their cattle. So ranchers drove their cattle to the railroad at Abilene.

Cattle sold in cow towns are raised on the **open range** [unfenced prairie]. On ranges from Texas to Canada, the cattle feed on prairie grasses.

Cowboys take care of the cattle on the range. Once a year, cowboys take cattle on the "**long drive**" to the cow towns.

These long drives cover thousands of miles along paths like the **Chisholm Trail**. There is grass and water along these trails. So the cowboys are sure their cattle will stay alive until they can be sold in the cow town.

Cattle prices are high. Ranchers are getting as much as \$40 apiece for cattle that cost \$4 each to raise.

But these high prices may fall soon because:

- Cattle ranchers are raising too many cattle. Eastern markets are getting enough beef. And there is not enough open range to feed the larger herds.

- Sheep ranchers are using the same grass and water that the cattle ranchers use. Sheep eat up range grass. The sheep rancher fences in water holes so cattle on the range cannot get water.

NATION: Farming the Great Plains

Free Homesteads: Easy to Get, Hard to Keep

Nebraska, 1880

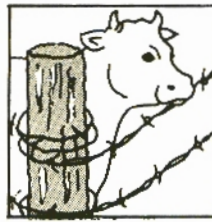
The U.S. government wants all of the U.S. to be settled. So the government is giving away its public lands on the Great Plains and in the Southwest.

The **Homestead Act of 1862** gives 160 acres of land free to anyone who will start a farm on the land.

So far, thousands of people have become homesteaders. **Homesteaders** are the people who live on the land, build homes to live in, and farm the land.

Many homesteaders are asking, "Now that we have the land, what do we do with it?" Prairie land is hard to farm because:

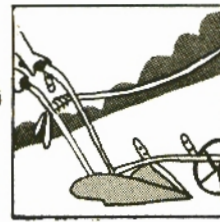
- The **sod** [top layer of soil] is hard, and seeds don't grow well.
- There is little rain and few rivers and lakes for water.
- There are few trees for wood



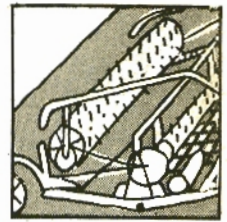
Barbed Wire



Windmill



Steel plow



Reaper

A look at inventions helping homesteaders

to build houses and fences.

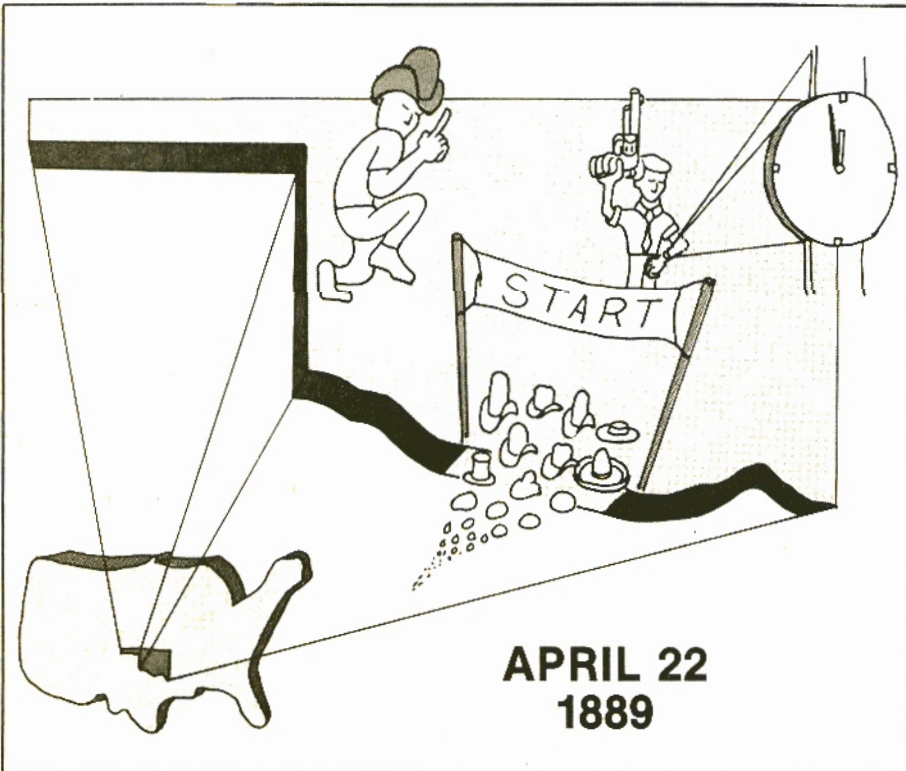
New inventions give these prairie homesteaders some help, though. These inventions are:

- **Barbed wire** for fences. With barbed wire, the farmers don't need wood fences.
- **The steel plow.** It will not break as it breaks up hard sod.
- **The windmill.** It pumps water from deep wells where the only water on the prairie is found.
- **The reaper.** This machine can harvest big fields of ripe grain faster than people can harvest even small fields.

THE HOMESTEAD ACT is a law that gives away land on the Great Plains and in the Southwest. This land is public land [owned by the U.S. government]. The Homestead Act gives 160 acres of land free to anyone who:

- Is a U.S. citizen or is planning to become one.
- Will live on the land for five years.
- Will build a home and farm the land.

Oklahoma Opened to White Settlers: "Sooners" Beat the Clock



Oklahoma Border, April 22, 1889

Today at noon the U.S. government opened Indian lands here to white settlers. Thousands of people lined up at the border. They wanted to be among the first to get free land.

But many "**sooners**" had already claimed the land. They crossed the border and found the land they wanted "sooner" than noon today.

States Admitted to the Union:

- 1867: Nebraska
- 1876: Colorado
- 1889-1890: Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming
- 1896: Utah