

MOUNTAIN MEN AND FUR TRAPPERS

- The first settlers were the mountain men and fur trappers like Jeremiah Johnson, Jim Beckwith and Jim Bridger. They met once a year at the Rendezvous to sell the furs which lead to the building of forts like Fort Hall, Fort Bridger and Fort Kearney.
- They told stories of California and Oregon which encouraged migration. They also developed relationships with Indians, mapped routes, and after 1840 when the fur trade declined they worked as guides for the Western migrants.

THE MORMONS IN THE EAST

- The founder of the Mormon religion was Joseph Smith in Palmyra, New York in 1823. He thought the lost tribes of Israel came to America and warred until Jesus came to form the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints.
- They were called the Mormons after the Book of Mormon. Thus they were seen as blasphemous by some and also became unpopular for Polygamy, their tobacco and alcohol abstinence and common ownership.
- They were moved on from New York, to Kirtland Ohio in 1831, Missouri in 1837 and finally Brigham Young decided to move them West after Smith was killed in Illinois in 1845.

THE GREAT SALT LAKE AND MORMON MOVE WEST

- Young made the Journey West successful by abandoning the journey in 1846 and setting up a winter camp. He sent and advanced party of 150 forward for 2,000 km, who mapped the route, found resources and water, arranged the journey into groups of 100 wagons headed by a Captain and 10 lieutenants, and using wagon protective circles.
- By June 1847, 1,500 had made it to SLC, by 1870 this rose to 70,000.
- Salt Lake City was successful because land was fairly divided among the people into blocks of 8 in the centre around the temple, 5, 10 and 10-80 acre plots for larger families. Land was owned by the church, everyone worked together and Water was also fairly distributed for drinking and irrigation.
- A Perpetual Emigrating Fund enabled new Mormons to be brought in.

EARLY MIGRANTS / MANIFEST DESTINY

- In 1825 Jedidiah Smith discovered the South Pass through the Rockies and in 1836 Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and Henry and Eliza Spalding became the first people to use the Oregon Trail. They were followed by the first family, the Walkers in 1840.
- 1843 saw the Great Migration of 1,000 settlers using the Fremont Map and headed by Whitman.
- Many left due to Pull factors like Public Domain Land, Gold, the benefits of Christianising Indians and positive stories of Oregon and California.
- Or Push factors like 1837 Depression, 40% but in wages, 25% unemployment, religious persecution and lack of land.
- In 1845 the government pushed the idea of moving West as the duty and obligation of white people to Christianise, civilize and democratise the American West. This was done to ensure that territories were settled and safe from their former imperial owners, Britain, France and Spain.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF UTAH AS A STATE.

- Young got Utah accepted as Mormon Territory in 1849 by helping the US in the Mexican War in 1848
- Charging migrants to cross Utah lead to California sending 1,500 troops to Utah and the Mountain Meadow massacre (140 people). In 1857 he made peace by accepting a non-Mormon governor in 1858.
- He accepted anti-polygamy laws, 1862 but he died in 1877 so Polygamy ended and Utah was a state by 1896.

MIGRANTS

PROBLEMS AND DANGERS AND THE DONNER PARTY

- The Indians could be a problem – but not always. They attacked the Donner Party when they were crossing the Salt flats and helped kill 200 oxen.
- It was a long journey of 3,200 km West to Oregon or 3,600 km to California. This meant diseases like Cholera, childbirth, broken wagon wheels, stampeding oxen, high winds, floods and drought, could be an issue. Also migrants could fall out such as on the Donner Party route in 1845 when James Reed killed a fellow migrant at Iron Point.
- Journeys took about 4 1/2 months, avoiding winter blizzards. However, this the Donner Party of 88 lead by George and Jacob Donner, who broke off from the 300 strong group to take the Hastings short cut, failed and hit heavy snow in October 1845. The Forlorn Hope made it to California but only 7/ 15 survived and the dead were eaten, as were many left in the Mountains. Only 1/3 men and 2/3 of women survived.
- The Donner also faced the Wasatch Mountain but those going to California had to hit the Sierra Nevada and Oregon the Blue Mountains and the Dalles River.
- The wagon needed Tallow, Tar Barrel, Water Barrel, Hard Bed, dried food, baking soda. Hickory frame and Canvas by April and restocking at Fork Kearney or Bridger.

THE MINERS

- Gold was discovered in California in 1848 by James Marshall. After John Sutter hid this discovery Sam Brannon advertised it and 10,000 moved West.
- 80,000 arrived in California in 1849, which is why they were called Forty-Niners
- By that time most of the good gold deposits had gone and they worked for mining companies for very little money.
- Most were under 30 and male and the early mining communities faced major issues with road agents, claim jumping, clam salting, vigilantes, a lack of law and order,
- San Francisco became a financial centre and a banking industry that would finance Western development. It also became a trading centre with the rest of the world. It became a multicultural society but there was much violence and lawlessness like the Crime Wave of 1851.