

Migration Westward in the US: 1840-1900

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Push-Pull of Migration 1840-1900

1. The decision to migrate depends on factors pushing your ancestor out of the current location and pulling them to a new location
2. What pushed your ancestors out?
 - Urbanization and overpopulation
 - Lack of opportunities
 - Crop failure
 - Financial disaster
3. Pull Factors 1840-1900
 - Land
 - Gold
 - Employment
 - Ease of getting there
 - Newspaper accounts

Advances in Transportation

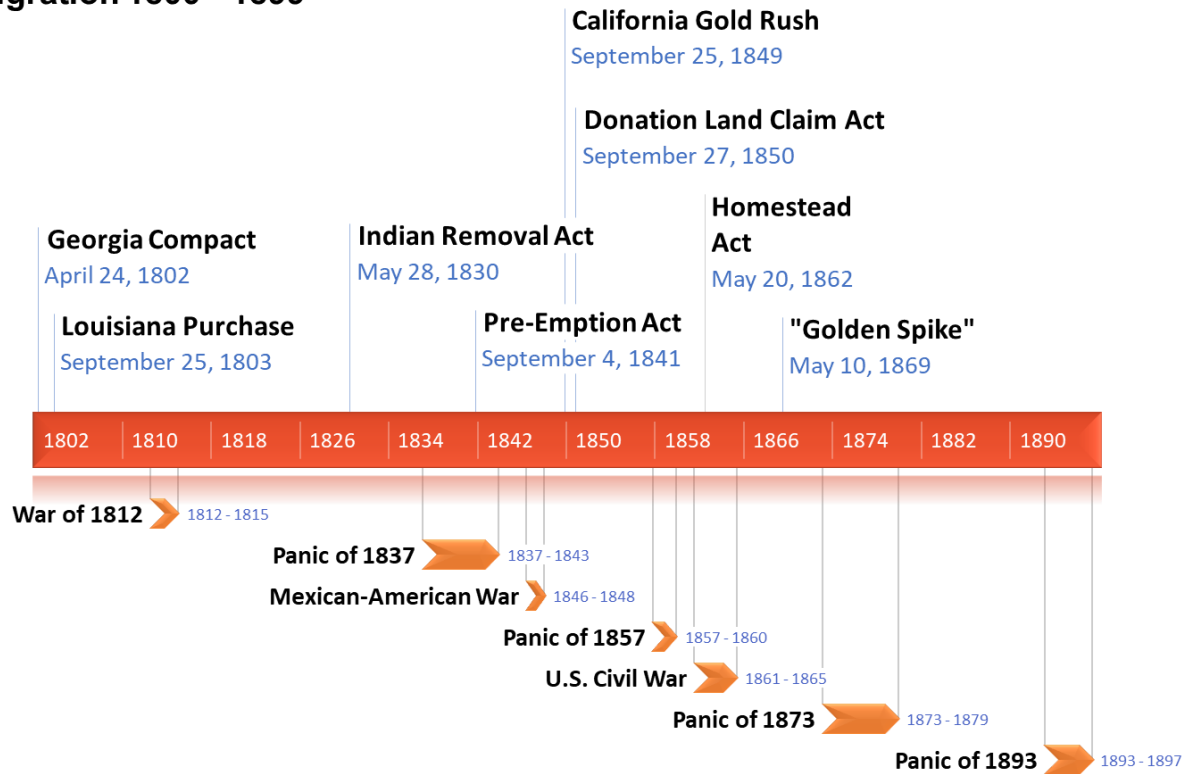
1. Transportation Recap
 - a. Colonial era transportation used roads that were mostly widened Native American paths.
 - b. Some military roads were constructed during colonial years, notably Braddock's Road (1755) from Cumberland, Maryland to Fort Dusquene (Pittsburg) and Forbes Road (1758) from Carlisle to Fort Dusquene.
 - c. Numerous roads sprang up after the Revolutionary War financed by the new federal government as well as by private enterprises. Because the process of building roads was so expensive, private corporations formed to issue stock to raise the monies needed to pay for labor and materials. After a road was completed, tolls were collected from the users of the roads. Inns and taverns sprang up to serve the needs of the weary travelers.
 - d. The first toll road was the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, built by a private company in 1792. The Great Western Turnpike, financed by a private corporation, was begun in 1799 and connected Albany with Cherry Valley, a distance of about 60 miles.
 - e. The National Road was the first highway constructed by the federal government. It was built between 1811 and 1837 and connected Cumberland Maryland with Vandalia,

Illinois.

2. The first public railway in the US was the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which opened in 1830 with only 23 miles of track. The locomotive that ran on the track was known as the Tom Thumb and was built by Peter Cooper for the B & O.
3. In 1834, the construction of the Boston and Albany railway was begun. By 1840 there were numerous short railroads along the Eastern Seaboard. Each of these railroads used different gauge (width) tracks so that the lines could not interconnect.
4. By 1840 advances in railway construction included the T-rail that we see today and the use of crushed stone as the bed for the ties and rails.
5. By 1850, every state east of the Mississippi had a railroad and cities were beginning to be connected. Railroads were faster and cheaper to construct than canals and could run year around (canals froze in the winter).
6. Pony Express: April 1860 – established to deliver mail to California in 10 days. Ceased operation in October 1861 when first telegraph line completed
7. Discussions for the transcontinental railroad began in 1830. Arguments focused on the “best” route for the railroad: a northern route following the Missouri River, a central route following the Oregon Trail and a southern route through Texas, New Mexico Territory and into southern California. The operation of the Pony Express showed that the central route was feasible, even in the winter.
8. The Central Pacific and Union Pacific companies were chartered by Congress in 1862 to construct the railroad. The compensation package for the construction created a race to the finish. The companies received \$16,000 per mile built over easy grade, \$32,000 per mile on the high plains and \$48,000 per mile through the mountains. This led to the companies to construct many extra miles of track and direct the route to land the companies already owned.
9. Central Pacific started at Sacramento and laid 690 miles through the Sierra Nevada mountains, including nine tunnels. The Union Pacific laid 1086 miles of track beginning in Omaha. The two teams met on 10 May 1869 at Promontory Point, Utah to drive the Golden Spike.

Federal Policies and Other Stimulants

Major Events Affecting Migration 1800 - 1899



1. Policies Affecting Native Tribes
 - a. Georgia Compact: The US government paid the state of Georgia 1.25 million dollars for the lands that Georgia claimed in what is now Alabama and Mississippi, west of the Chattahoochee river. In addition, US promised to remove the Cherokee people from Georgia lands.
 - b. Louisiana Purchase: Jefferson hoped to move Native nations to land west of the Mississippi and encourage the nations to give up the semi-nomadic way of life and instead raise livestock and live in town.
 - c. Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced Native nations off their land in southeastern states. It was accomplished over the period 1831-1838.
2. California Gold Rush
 - a. Gold discovered at Sutter's Mill in California, January 24, 1848.
 - b. Over 300,000 miners, opportunists, settlers and others descended on the Sierra Nevada foothills.
3. Federal promotion of homesteading
 - a. Preemption Act of 1841. Allowed squatters on government land to purchase up to 160

acres at \$1.25 an acre provided the squatter was a head of household, a single man over 21, a widow, a citizen, and had lived on the land for 14 months.

- b. Homestead Act of 1862. Heads of household over age 21 who had lived on the land for 5 years, build a house and improved the land, could receive up to 160 acres.
4. Financial Panics as push factors in migration
 - a. Panic of 1837 - Triggered by many factors including crop failure, collapse in cotton prices, land speculation and problems related to many different types of currency in circulation. Lasted six years.
 - b. Panic of 1857 - Triggered by the failure of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company due to speculation in railroads. Lasted two years.
 - c. Panic of 1873 - Triggered by bankruptcy of investment firm of Jay Cooke and Company resulting from speculation in railroads. Lasted five years.
 - d. Panic of 1893 – Collapse of speculation in railroads. One in six men lost their jobs. Lasted four years.

Major Migration Trails

1. Oregon Trail: First laid out 1811 by trappers – only a footpath. By 1836 – wagon trail to Fort Hall, Idaho
2. Mormon Trail: Migration begun in 1846. From Nauvoo, Illinois to Salt Lake City, Utah
3. Santa Fe Trail: First blazed in 1821 by William Becknell to open trade with Mexico
4. California Trail: Route laid out in 1844 but took off during the Gold Rush. Many alternative routes developed

Resources

Billington, Ray and Martin Ridge, *Westward Expansion* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2001).

Jefferson Monticello, <https://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/president-jefferson-and-indian-nations>

Paullin, Charles Oscar. *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States*. Washington, D.C., New York: Pub. Jointly by Carnegie institution of Washington and the American geographical society of New York, 1932.

Eldridge, Carrie. *An Atlas of Northern Trails Westward from New England* (Chesapeake, OH : C. Eldridge, 2000).

Eldridge, Carrie. *An Atlas of Appalachian Trails to the Ohio River* (Chesapeake, OH : C. Eldridge, 1998).



Eldridge, Carrie. *An Atlas of Trails West of the Mississippi River* (Chesapeake, OH : C. Eldridge, 2001).

Websites to find your Oregon Settler

- Pioneer families of the Oregon Territory, 1850- (\$) <https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=28583>
- Secretary of state - individuals who lived in Oregon prior to statehood through 1860 <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/prs/personProfileSearch.do?earlyOregonian>
- Paper Trail Database - By Oregon California Trails Association; A Guide to Overland Pioneer Document. <http://www.paper-trail.org/search.asp>
- Over-land Trail - Website listing multiple trail lists for various states. <http://www.over-land.com/emigrants.html>
- Family History Research. A Guide to Overland Pioneer Documents. Oregon-California Trails Association. <https://www.octa-trails.org/preserve/family-history-research>
- The Oregon Territory and Its Pioneers_ Includes year-by-year lists of pioneers pre-1839 to 1855. <http://www.oregonpioneers.com/ortrail.htm>
- Pioneer & Early Settler Certificates - order a search of Pioneer list of the Oregon Genealogical Society <http://oregongs.org/cpage.php?pt=11>
- Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers. <http://oregonsdop.org/ancestors/>

Websites to find your Mormon Settlers

- Mormon Migration. <https://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/>
- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2365248>

Websites to find your California Trail Settlers

- California, Pioneer and Immigrant Files, 1790-1950 - (\$) <https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2161>
- California, Pioneer Index, 1769-1848 - (\$) <https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1040>
- CAGenWeb USGenWeb Project Roster of California Pioneers_ http://www.cagenweb.com/cpl/cpl_list.htm
- Native Daughters of the Golden West California Pioneer Project Master Surname Index - CaGenWeb <http://www.cagenweb.com/cpl/ndgwmaster.htm>
- Over-land Trail - Website listing multiple trail lists for various states. <http://www.over-land.com/emigrants.html>

- California Pioneer Index (California), 1906-1935 - digital images on FamilySearch Catalog: [FHL films 1712022-1712041](#)Paper Trail Database - By Oregon California Trails Association;
- A Guide to Overland Pioneer Document. <https://www.octa-trails.org/genealogy-paper-trail/>