

Chapter 26 The Great West & the Agricultural Revolution

Presented by:
Mr. Anderson, M.Ed., J.D.

1

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and "Indian Territory," or Oklahoma
 - Areas in which settlers turned out in record numbers
- A clash of cultures on the plains
 - Native Americans numbered about 360,000 in 1860
 - As Whites expand westward Native Americans are forced to scatter
 - Numbers severely decline
 - Buffalo hunted to near extinction through wholesale butchery by whites



2

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- Native Americans are forced onto reservations
- Small pockets of humanitarians advocated for the kind treatment of the Indians although they had no more respect for traditional Indian culture than those who sought to exterminate them
- United States military is sent in to move or exterminate Native Americans
 - "Buffalo Soldiers" were African American soldiers who served in the United States Cavalry



Expanding Into the Great Plains

- **Native Americans strike back**
 - Fetterman Massacre – Sioux war party attempting to block construction of the Bozeman Trail
 - Massacred and mutilated 81 soldiers and civilians
 - General Custer leads an expedition into the Black Hills of South Dakota in search for gold
 - The aggrieved Sioux took to the warpath, inspired by the influential and wily Sitting Bull
 - Custer is completely wiped out by Sitting Bull's war party
 - One of very few Indian victories in the Great Plains wars
 - United States Military hunts down and destroys all Native Americans involved



4

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- Apache tribes led by Geronimo were the most difficult to subdue (AZ and NM)
 - Apache women were exiled to Florida ultimately causing the Apache to give in
 - The settled in OK and became successful farmers
- The Dawes Act – 1887
 - Dissolved many tribes as legal entities
 - Tried to make rugged individualists of the Indians
 - Wiped out tribal ownership of land
 - Promised Indians US citizenship in 25 years
 - American culture and religion forced upon the Native Americans



5

[illegible]

6

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- After exploring much of the West, geologist John Wesley Powell warned in 1874 that land west of the 100th meridian could not be farmed without extensive irrigation
- In 1890, when the superintendent of the census announced that a stable frontier line was no longer discernible, Americans were disturbed because the idea of an endlessly open West had been an element of America's history from the beginning
- Western cities like Denver and San Francisco served as safety valves by providing home for economically struggling farmers, miners and easterners
 - Most Western cities become safety valves



7

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- The Farm becomes a factory
 - In the last decades of the 19th century the volume of agricultural goods increased and the price of these goods decreased
 - Farmers were slow to organize and promote their interest because they were, by nature, highly independent and individualistic
 - Farmers had to specialize in one crop which presented many problems
 - Farmers become extremely unhappy
 - The National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry— better known as the Grange— was organized in 1867
 - Original purpose was to stimulate self-improvement through educational and social activities



8

Expanding Into the Great Plains

- The Farmers' Alliance
 - Originally formed to break the economic grip of the railroads through farmers' cooperatives
 - Unfortunately, the Alliance weakened itself by ignoring the plight of landless tenant farmers, share- croppers, and farm workers
 - Even more debilitating was the Alliance's exclusion of blacks, who counted for nearly half the agricultural population of the South
 - Out of the Farmers' Alliance is born a new political party known as the Populists
 - The severe economic depression of the 1890's strengthened the Populists' argument that wage earners and farmers alike were victims of an oppressive economic system



Expanding Into the Great Plains

- Coxe's Army and the Pullman Strike
 - Jacob Coxe marches on Washington DC to fight for the rights of the unemployed
 - The Pullman Palace Car Company was hit hard by depression
 - The workers finally struck—in some places overturning Pullman cars—and paralyzed railway traffic
 - Grover Cleveland sends in federal troops to break up the strike on the grounds that it was preventing the transit of US mail
 - Richard Olney – US attorney general who brought in federal troops to crush the strike
 - Eugene V. Debs – Head of the American Railway Union that organized the strike
 - George Pullman – Owner of the "palace railroad car" company and the company town where the strike began
 - John P. Altgeld – Governor of Illinois who sympathized with the striking workers



10

Election of 1896

- Republican William McKinley defeats Democrat William Jennings Bryan
 - Major issue of the Election of 1896 was the free and unlimited coinage of silver
 - Populists supported Bryan which essentially had them abandoning their identity
 - Populists who stayed true to their colors supported Mark Hanna because they feared the radicalism of William Jennings Bryan and his free silver cause
 - The outcome was a resounding victory for big business, the big cities, middle-class values, and financial conservatism
 - The 1896 election marked the last time a serious effort to win the White House would be made with mostly agrarian votes
 - Bryan goes on to lose three presidential elections



11

Ch. 26 Quiz – Period 3

- What animal was hunted to near extinction during this time?
- What were "Buffalo Soldiers?"
- What tribe did Geronimo lead?
- What Native American chief lead the charge to defeat General Custer?
- What was the Dawes Act?

12

Ch. 26 Quiz – Period 5

- What animal was hunted to near extinction during this time?
- What were “Buffalo Soldiers”?
- What tribe did Geronimo lead?
- What Native American chief lead the charge to defeat General Custer?
- What was the Dawes Act?

13
