

Ch 13 Changes on the Western Frontier

Section 1 Cultures Clash on the Prairie

The Culture of the Plains Indians

Life on the Plains

- **Great Plains**—grasslands in west-central portion of the U.S.
- East: hunting, farming villages; west: nomadic hunting, gathering

The Horse and the Buffalo

- Horses, guns lead most Plains tribes to nomadic life by mid-1700s
- Trespassing others' hunting lands causes war; count coup for status
- Buffalo provides many basic needs:
 - hides used for teepees, clothes, blankets
 - meat used for jerky, pemmican

Family Life

- Extended families
- Form family groups with ties to other bands that speak same language
- Men are hunters, warriors; women butcher meat, prepare hides
- Believe in powerful spirits that control natural world
 - men or women can become shamans
- Children learn through myths, stories, games, example
- Communal life; leaders rule by counsel

Settlers Push Westward

Clash of Cultures

- Native Americans: land cannot be owned; settlers: want to own land
- Settlers think natives forfeited land because did not improve it
- Since consider land unsettled, migrants go west to claim it

The Lure of Silver and Gold

- 1858 discovery of gold in Colorado draws tens of thousands
- Mining camps, tiny frontier towns have filthy, ramshackle dwellings
- Fortune seekers of different cultures, races; mostly men

The Government Restricts Native Americans

Railroads Influence Government Policy

- 1834, government designates Great Plains as one huge reservation
- 1850s, treaties define specific boundaries for each tribe

Massacre at Sand Creek

- Troops kill over 150 Cheyenne, Arapaho at Sand Creek winter camp

Death on the Bozeman Trail

- Bozeman Trail crosses Sioux hunting grounds
 - Red Cloud asks for end of settlements; Crazy Horse ambushes troops
- **Treaty of Fort Laramie**—U.S. closes trail; Sioux to reservation
- **Sitting Bull**, leader of Hunkpapa Sioux, does not sign treaty

Bloody Battles Continue

Red River War

- 1868, Kiowa, Comanche engage in 6 years of raiding
- 1874–1875, U. S. Army crushes resistance on Plains in Red River War

Gold Rush

- 1874 **George A. Custer** reports much gold in Black Hills, rush begins

Custer's Last Stand

- 1876, Sitting Bull has vision of war at sun dance
- Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Gall crush Custer's troops
- By late 1876, Sioux are defeated; some take refuge in Canada
 - people starving; Sitting Bull surrenders 1881

The Government Supports Assimilation

The Dawes Act

- 1881, Helen Hunt Jackson exposes problems in *A Century of Dishonor*
- **Assimilation**—natives to give up way of life, join white culture
- 1887, **Dawes Act** to “Americanize” natives, break up reservations, was designed to benefit white settlers
 - gives land to individual Native Americans
 - sell remainder of land to settlers
 - money for farm implements for natives
- In the end, Natives Americans receive only 1/3 of land, no money

The Destruction of the Buffalo

- Destruction of buffalo most significant blow to tribal life
- Tourists, fur traders shoot for sport, destroy buffalo population

The Battle of Wounded Knee

Wounded Knee

- Ghost Dance—ritual to regain lost lands
 - spreads among Sioux on Dakota reservation
- Dec. 1890, Sitting Bull is killed when police try to arrest him
- Seventh Cavalry takes about 350 Sioux to Wounded Knee Creek
- **Battle of Wounded Knee**—cavalry kill 300 unarmed Native Americans
- Battle ends Indian wars between federal government and the Plains Indians, Sioux dream of regaining old life

Cattle Become Big Business

Vaqueros and Cowboys

- American settlers learn to manage large herds from Mexican vaqueros
 - adopt way of life, clothing, vocabulary
- Texas **longhorns**—sturdy, short-tempered breeds brought by Spanish
- Cowboys not in demand until railroads reach Great Plains

Growing Demand for Beef

- After Civil War demand for meat increases in rapidly growing cities

The Cow Town

- Cattlemen establish shipping yards where trails and rail lines meet
- Demand for beef in the East contributed to the development of the **Chisholm Trail**, which becomes major cattle route from San Antonio to Kansas

A Day in the Life of a Cowboy

A Day's Work

- 1866–1885, up to 55,000 cowboys on plains
 - 25% African American, 12% Mexican
- Cowboy works 10–14 hours on ranch; 14 or more on trail
- Cowboys used guns to protect their herds
- Expert rider, roper; alert for dangers that may harm, upset cattle

Roundup

- During spring roundup, longhorns found, herded into corral
- Separate cattle marked with own ranch's brand; brand calves

The Long Drive

- Herding of animals or **long drive** lasts about 3 months
- Cowboy in saddle dawn to dusk; sleeps on ground; bathes in rivers

Legends of the West

- Celebrities like "Wild Bill" Hickok, Calamity Jane never handled cows

The End of the Open Range

Changes in Ranching

- Overgrazing, bad weather from 1883 to 1887 destroy whole herds
- Ranchers keep smaller herds that yield more meat per animal
- Fence land with barbed wire; turn open range into separate ranches