WESTWARD EXPANSION: 1820-1890
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Presented by:
Russ Gifford, October 14, 2019
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That said:

• Tell me ONE THING you learned last week!
Last Week:

• Did you learn anything about the Plains Wars that you did not previously know?
Things to consider this week:

- Why drives American policy toward Indians? Why does it change?

- What changes most impact treatment of Indians?
Last Week:

• I asked – can we see a different way this could have worked out?
WESTWARD EXPANSION

Things to consider:

We saw three actions - none of them pleasant:
• Trade / Interaction
• Displacement / Confinement
• Warfare / Destruction
WESTWARD EXPANSION

Questions from last week:

Indian Population:
In 1890  225,000
In 1930  330,000
In 1960  524,000
Today –

Roughly 1 million Native Americans are living on a Reservation.
Questions from last week:

Indian Population:
1990 – 1.9 MILLION
2013 – 5.2 MILLION
Only Native American – 2.5 million
Estimate for 2020 – 6 Million
WESTWARD EXPANSION: 1820-1890
Cattle, Commerce, and the Coming of the Railroad, 1865 to 1889
TIMELINE DATES

1854: Unrest nationally as Kansas Nebraska Act unsettles country. Weak Presidents but good business climate.


1859: Sioux Uprising in Minnesota begins.

1860: First settlers. Levee built! Businesses, banks and schools follow!

1861: Iowa provides large number of soldiers for North. War begins.

1862: National Homestead Act

1865: Lincoln Assassinated, Civil War Ends

1868: National effort on Rail construction.

1868: First RR Train Arrives! Riverboats move from St. Louis!

City platted. Speculators move in, and City begins first growth spurt!
ECONOMIC WINS AND WOES

Thoughts today:

1. Over the second half of the 19th Century, industry was growing.

Oil, Iron, Steel, Railroads, Food Production, Meat Packing – All were growing huge – why?
Thoughts today:

2. We have spoken of the basic myths that form our perception of our history. What about those ideas and ideals for the era of the ‘cowboy’ and the ‘homesteader?’
PROBLEMS OF THE PLAINS

• Too far from the market
• Too hot or too arid
• Too little wood for fire
• Too little wood for houses
The Cowboy is the enduring symbol of America –

The self-reliant loner.
The individual facing a tough, unforgiving country without flinching.
Who isn’t much for people – but sings low lullaby’s to the cattle.
John Wayne, Walter Brenan, The Red River, 1948
The Industrial Revolution required men to run feed the machinery, and food to feed the men and their families.

Cities grew – and required food.

The West had cattle – the Cities had people.
Long Horns were descendants of cattle that had escaped the Spanish herds over the centuries.

Some 5 million Long Horn Cattle that belonged to no one were feeding off the open range in south Texas.
• Earlier cattle drives to Louisiana and to St. Louis had proven it could work.

• At $4 a head in Texas, and $40 a head in Chicago, it could be very profitable.

But how to get cattle to the cities?
• The expansion of the Railroads in the 1860s made it possible.
An Illinois stock man had the idea, and let it be known in Texas that if they could get cattle to his new stockyard in Abilene, he would pay them well.

Those cattle bosses hired the men that could make it happen – the cowboys.
In 1867, the Kansas Pacific Railroad reached Abilene on the way to Denver.

(The Drover’s Hotel, at the Abilene Stockyards. 1867)
These cattle were wild. It would require skilled men to capture them, and drive them to Kansas.
Cowboys originated here – men who could stay in a saddle for 12 to 15 hours, skilled with a rope, and familiar with the temperament of these cattle.
What today’s media rarely gets right is there were many black and Mexican Cowboys in this era after the Civil War – and they were accepted based on their skills.
IT WASN’T ABOUT SPEED

• Each spring, cattle rounded up and branded.

• When herd assembled, a slow walk of 10 to 15 miles per day.

• Had to have grass and water, and not mingle with buffalo.

It could take 2 months – and rivers flood in spring.
IT WASN’T ABOUT SPEED

• Cowboys didn’t hurry the cattle – they kept them together.

• They trudged to Kansas at a steady pace, to keep the cattle from losing weight.
RAILROADS

• Railroad’s created special ‘cattle cars.’

• 25,000 to 30,000 cattle came to Abilene – and his stockyards that first year.
Before he started, McCoy boasted he’d bring 200,000 cattle to Abilene in 10 years.
RAILROADS

It was actually 2 million.

In 4 years.

The boast made him known as ‘The Real McCoy.’

Joseph McCoy
But that wasn’t the only change -

McCoy’s success transformed Abilene.
COWTOWNS

With those cattle came 5,000 cowboys.

All getting paid off on the same day.
• With 5,000 cowboys with money to spend towns could become rough places.

• After the first town marshal was assassinated, "Wild Bill" Hickok was hired as Abilene's town marshal in 1871.
• As railroads expanded, so did homesteaders – and homesteading and cattle drives did not mix.
MOVING WEST

The trailhead shifted west – first to Newton, Kansas – which became known as “the roughest town in the West with 27 saloons, eight gambling halls, and a boot hill.”
But Ellsworth, Kansas wanted the business – and they moved McCoy’s Drover Cottage to Ellsworth! They doubled what Newton shipped in a year. 30,000!
But the same thing happened to Ellsworth when 1872 the Wichita and South Western Railroad line reached Wichita. It shipped 66,000 head in one year!

But when the quarantine laws caught up, the business moved to Dodge City in 1875, and remain there.
• Dodge City would have more fame than the others – and a lawman known as Wyatt Earp.

• Other lawmen of the era Bat Masterson, and ‘Doc’ Holliday also resided in Dodge City.
May 10, 1869. The Continent is connected by rail.
THE JOINING OF THE RAILS

Photograph by Andrew J. Russell, May 1869
Land Grants and proposed Rail lines, 1870
• Things are changing everywhere!

• In 1860, Iowa had 192,000 people, mostly Norwegians, Swedes, and Dutch.

As the later rush develops by 1870 Germans, Irish, English, Canadian, and the Netherlands are major nationalities ‘filling in’ Iowa.
• The expansion of the Railroads made major changes in businesses, and in towns.
Sioux City dominates riverboat traffic!

Completion of Railroad to West Coast. Shipping begins to move to rail, rather than river.

Hayes wins disputed election. Reconstruction ends.

Gold in Black Hills?

Booge starts first meat processing plant in SC!

Yankton new riverboat capital. Sioux City now looks to agriculture

Little Big Horn

national Panic of ‘73

First Corn palace! Pres. Cleveland visits!

Union Stockyards organized

Boom years with huge growth and building spurt!

Elevated Railway to Morningside!

Haddock Murdered

Immigration, and backlash grows across the country.

The Rise of Manufacturing

South & North Dakota admitted as states, 1889.

Frontier Closes.

Rise of Redeemer Nation

1885

1888

1890

1893

1869  1872  1876  1878  1880  1882  1885  1888
Sioux City begins to develop as a regional market for ag goods – and as a place to buy the tools you need as an ag producer.

Pearl Street – Sioux City’s main avenue of commerce, 1860s.
DEVELOPING SIOUX CITY

“Tootle and Jackson“ the first store for Sioux City arrives – it is a prefabricated store, with $24,000 worth of goods and supplies.
SIOUX CITY 1859-1865

New people are arriving – many with the skills and resources to drive a young town forward.

Pearl Street – North of Second Street 1860s.
The Hedges Brothers, Daniel and Charles, were very successful at retail. Their records indicate that their annual business in some years amounted to $600,000!
Looking west from 8th and Jackson, 1863
DEVELOPING SIOUX CITY

“The Sawyer Block housed Kirk’s Dry Goods, a millinery shop.

Sawyer was a prominent Sioux City soldier & steamboater.

Sawyers Block – Sioux City’s first 3 story brick building. Second and Pearl, 1867.
Pearl Street – 1869, from the Sawyer Block.
It is the arrival of the Railroad in 1868 that provides a huge lift to Sioux City – moving it to the riverboat mecca of the Missouri!

“SAVED AT LAST!”

First train into Sioux City, March 9, 1868
One steamboat company leaps to Sioux City immediately.

Three steamboat companies will call Sioux City home by 1870.

Steamer Warehouse at Perry Creek, Kountz Line, 1871
Though their time as steamboat center of the frontier is short, it is very profitable for Sioux City.

Dry Dock for repairs at foot of Pierce St, 1869?
MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

James Booge, a local grocery wholesaler, and government pork contractor, constructs the city’s first large hog processing business.
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A FAMOUS RANCHER

- He’d come west to establish a ranch because he admired these tough ‘cowboys’ and enjoyed the idea of self reliance.
With another change, refrigerator cars meant local businesses could create slaughterhouses, and ship the results to the cities.

A local friend of TR’s started processing plant, and they did well in the boom years of the 1880s.
But market problems, like the terrible winter of 1886 the summer was terrible, and the winter drove many off the land.

The industry crashed – and with the market failure of the early 1890s would change the cattle market, and the drives.
ECONOMIC WINS AND WOES

• Cheap Labor meant American Steel Production outpaced the world by 1890.
• Monopolies were the aim – creating trusts.
• While the pain starts in the farm states, it would grow.
NEXT WEEK -

• The rise of the Railroad meets the rise of the farmer.

• Who wins?
For further reading:

- *Nothing Like It In the World*, Stephen Ambrose,
- *Fort Robinson and the American West*, Buecker, 1999
CREATED AND PRODUCED BY

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Pictures provided by the Sioux City Public Museum, Nebraska History, Kansas Historical Society and other regional historical groups.