

Ch 5 Changes on the Western Frontier

Section 1 Native American Cultures In Crisis

Great Plains – the grassland extending through the west-central portion of the U.S., home too many Native American tribes

1. Impact of Horses – allowed tribes to abandon their farming villages to roam the plains and hunt buffalo
2. Importance of Buffalo – provided many of their basic needs such as tepees, clothing, shoes, blankets, food, thread, tools, and toys
3. Family Life – usually lived in small extended family groups with ties to other bands that spoke the same language

Settlers Push Westward

1. Argued that the Native Americans had forfeited their rights to the land because they hadn't settled down to "improve" it, thus the plains remained unsettled
2. Lure of Gold and Silver – 1849 California & 1858 Colorado
3. Homestead Act (1862) – offered 160 acres of free land to anyone who would live on and cultivate it for five years
 - a. Exoduster – an African American who migrated from the South to Kansas in the post Reconstruction years

- b. Pacific Railroad Act (1862) – granted government loans and huge tracts of land to the Union Pacific (Omaha) and Central Pacific Railroads (Sacramento) to build a transcontinental RR, completed in 1869

Government Restricts Native Americans

1. Reservations – land set aside for Native American tribes
2. Sand Creek Massacre – an attack led by U.S. soldiers on a Cheyenne encampment in the Colorado Territory in 1864, in which 200 Native American men, women, and children were killed
 - a. John Chivington
3. Bozeman Trail – major transportation route that ran directly through the favorite hunting grounds of the Sioux, sight of many conflicts
 - a. Battle of the Hundred Slain (Fetterman Massacre)
 - b. Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) – the Sioux agreed to live on a reservation along the Missouri River in return for protection and supplies from the U.S. government

Custer's Last Stand

1. George Armstrong Custer – colonel in the 7th Cavalry sent to the Black Hills to protect settlers during the gold rush

2. June 25, 1876 Custer and his army rode out in search of glory, instead he made many major tactical mistakes and his army was slaughtered by Sioux and Cheyenne Indians led by Crazy Horse
3. American people were outraged and demanded revenge
4. Army continued to raid Native American camps and slaughter the buffalo ultimately forcing Sitting Bull and his people to surrender in 1885

Assimilation – plan under which Native Americans would give up their beliefs and way of life and become part of the white culture

1. Dawes Act – law enacted in 1887 that was intended to “Americanize” Native Americans by distributing reservation land to individual owners
 - a. Whites ended up taking most of the land, leaving useless farmland for the Native Americans
2. Educating Native Americans – Native American children were educated by whites and taught that their traditional way of life was backward and superstitious
3. Destruction of the Buffalo – perhaps the most significant blow to the plains Indians
 - a. Whites wiped out the Buffalo for sport or for their fur

Ghost Dance – Native American ritual intended to bring about the restoration of tribal life, popular among the Sioux prior to the Battle of Wounded Knee

1. Its popularity alarmed military leaders who decided to arrest Sitting Bull, resulting in Sitting Bull's death
2. Battle of Wounded Knee – the massacre by U.S. soldiers of 300 unarmed Native Americans at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota in 1890
 - a. Marked the end of the Indian Wars