

# Chapter 7

# Opening the West

## Chapter Preview

### TERMS

immigrant,  
buffer zone, annex,  
station, caravan,  
transcontinental  
railroad, contract

### PEOPLE

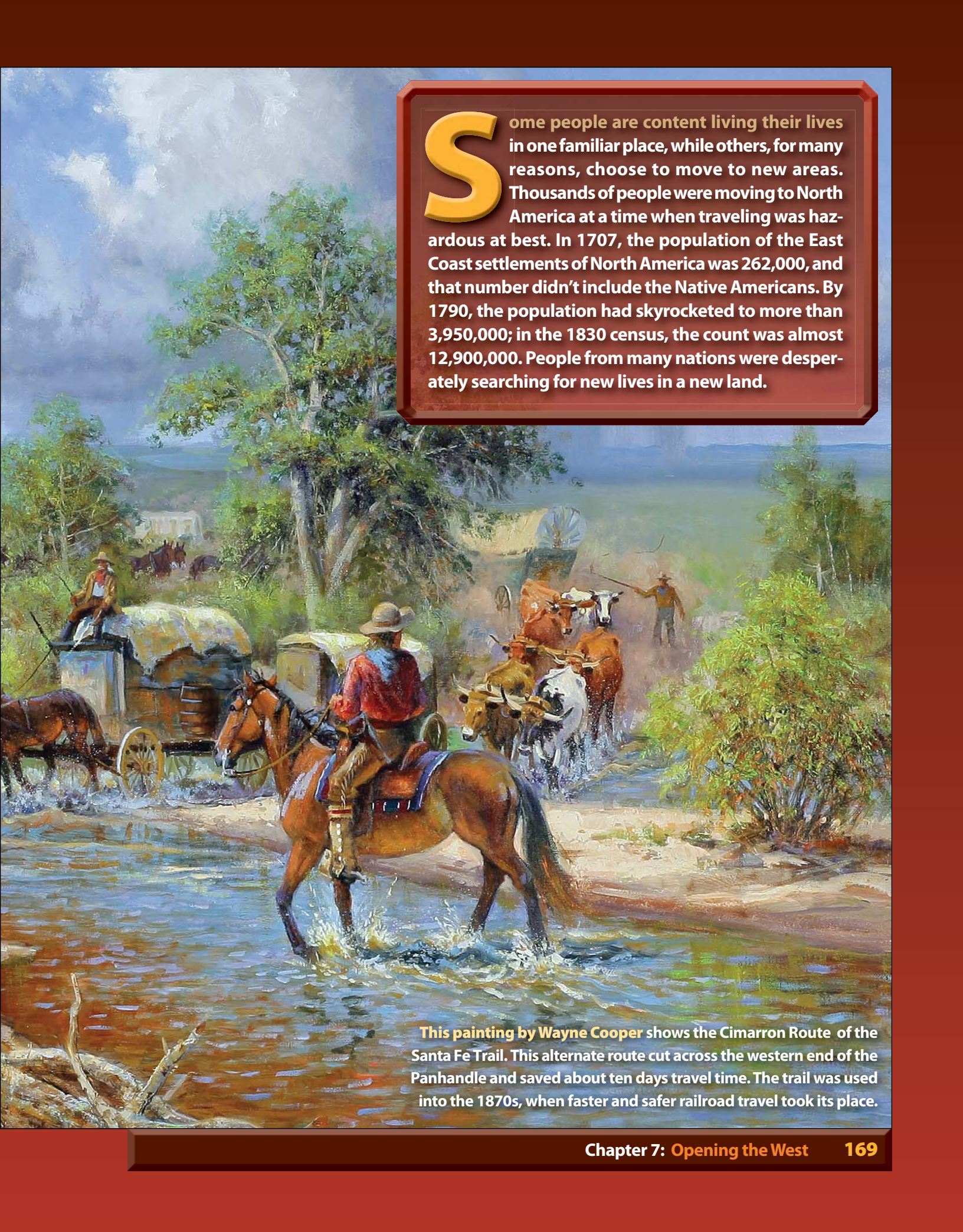
William Becknell,  
Captain Randolph B.  
Marcy, Lieutenant  
Amiel W. Whipple

### PLACES

Santa Fe Trail, Texas  
Road, California Road,  
Rock Mary







**S**ome people are content living their lives in one familiar place, while others, for many reasons, choose to move to new areas. Thousands of people were moving to North America at a time when traveling was hazardous at best. In 1707, the population of the East Coast settlements of North America was 262,000, and that number didn't include the Native Americans. By 1790, the population had skyrocketed to more than 3,950,000; in the 1830 census, the count was almost 12,900,000. People from many nations were desperately searching for new lives in a new land.

**This painting by Wayne Cooper** shows the Cimarron Route of the Santa Fe Trail. This alternate route cut across the western end of the Panhandle and saved about ten days travel time. The trail was used into the 1870s, when faster and safer railroad travel took its place.





# Signs of the Times

## POPULATION

In 1850, the U.S. population was 23,191,876. The country of birth of foreign-born people in the U.S. included Ireland, 962,000; Germany, 584,000; Great Britain, 379,000; Canada, 148,000; France, 54,000; Switzerland, 13,000; Mexico, 13,000; Norway, 13,000; Holland, 10,000; and Italy, 4,000.

## ENTERTAINMENT

P. T. Barnum opened his American Museum in New York City. Barnum exhibited General Tom Thumb and other “freaks” as well as many hoaxes, attracting the public with extravagant advertising.

## SLANG

Start the ball rolling. A one-horse town.  
To meet one's Waterloo.

## LITERATURE

Books of this period included James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pathfinder* and *The Deerslayer*, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*.

## INVENTIONS

In 1846, a Massachusetts dentist, Dr. William Morton, was the first to use anesthesia when extracting a tooth. Walter Hunt invented the safety pin in 1849. Pasteurization was invented by Louis Pasteur in 1856.

## GAMES

The game of golf was revolutionized in 1848 when Dr. Robert Adams developed a ball made of gutta percha, a natural latex produced from the sap of the tropical tree of the same name.



## Figure 7 Timeline: 1840–1860



1853  
Lt. Whipple surveyed route for transcontinental railroad

1858  
First run of the Butterfield Overland Mail to California

1851  
Fort Arbuckle established

1849  
California Road blazed

1845  
Abert/Peck began expedition across Territory

1840

1845

1850

1855

1860

1845  
Texas became a state

1846  
Mexican-American War began

1848  
Gold discovered in California

1854  
Kansas-Nebraska Act



# Section 1

## Westward Movement

### Something Extra!

Journalist John L. O'Sullivan first used the term *manifest destiny* in an essay, titled "Annexation," in which he encouraged the United States to admit the Republic of Texas into the Union.

### As you read, look for

- the reasons why people moved westward,
- the concept of manifest destiny,
- vocabulary terms **immigrant**, **buffer zone**, and **annex**.

**Immigrants saw the democratic principles of the new nation of the United States as a welcome change from the sometimes more repressive governments of their homelands.** (An **immigrant** is one who moves to a new country to settle there.) The new Americans enthusiastically embraced those democratic ideals. They believed the government of their new country was superior to the governments they had known before and that it was their mission to expand the democratic beliefs and ideals across the continent.

Emanuel Leütze painted *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* in 1862.





## Manifest Destiny

This mission came to be called *manifest destiny*. John L. O'Sullivan, who coined the term in 1844 in the *Democratic Review*, first documented the idea in 1839 when he wrote "the boundless future will be the era of American greatness. In its magnificent domain of space and time, the nation of many nations is destined to manifest to mankind the excellence of divine principles."

Other events were occurring in the United States while the idea of manifest destiny was taking hold. The burgeoning (fast-growing) population was quickly outgrowing the original thirteen states due to immigration and a high birth rate. Economic downturns in 1818 and 1839 caused some people to seek new lands, and frontier land was often inexpensive and offered new opportunities. The United States was also concerned about the claims of an unstable Mexican government to much of the southwestern territories (Texas to California) and British claims to the Oregon Territory in the northwest.

Settlers, traders, and hunters were steadily pushing westward. Their demands for new lands caused the federal government to relocate thousands of Native Americans and to secure new territories. Major Stephen Long, in 1819, had referred to the land west of the 98th meridian (including Oklahoma) as the "Great American Desert." He wrote that the land was "almost wholly unfit for cultivation" and that the barren land would keep people from moving too far west. This early impression was one of the main reasons that the Great Plains was chosen as the new land for the Indians, but it certainly didn't stop people from moving west.

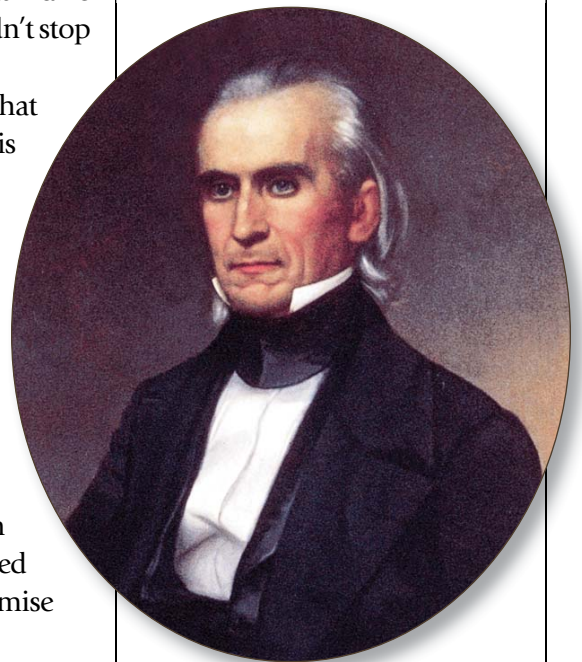
Movement was quickly expanding beyond the buffer zone that had been created by the Louisiana Purchase. (A **buffer zone** is a neutral area between two larger areas with different uses.) The first large group of Euro-Americans settled in Mexican-controlled Texas in 1821. By 1835, there were an estimated 145,000 Anglos (Americans) in Texas. Some 800 adventure-some Americans had settled in California, and about 4,000 had settled in Oregon. These settlers encouraged family and friends to join them, and they wanted American laws to protect them.

New President James K. Polk, elected in 1844 on a pro-expansion platform, quickly moved to make Texas the 28th state in 1845. Polk also settled the dispute between the United States and Great Britain over the Oregon Territory. A compromise divided that northwest territory at the 49th parallel.

Tensions rose between Mexico and the United States over the Texas annexation, a disputed border, and revolts in California. (To **annex** is to add on, such as adding territory to an existing town, city, or state.) The tensions escalated into the Mexican-American War, which lasted from 1846 to 1848. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe, signed in 1848, the

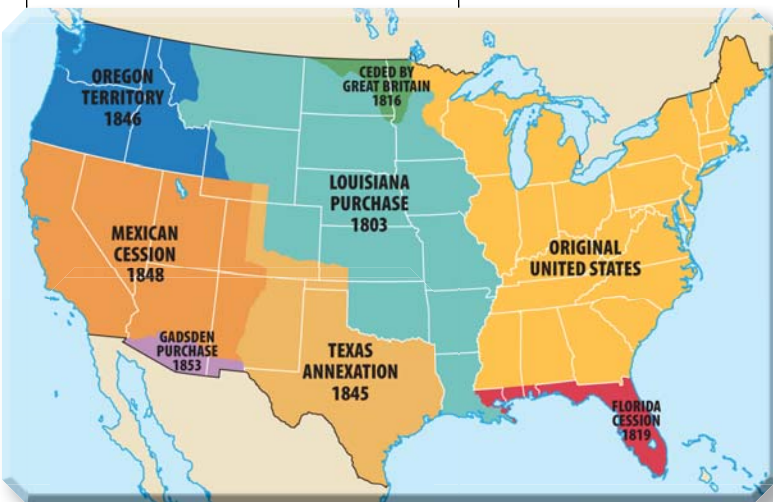
## Something Extra!

Missouri native Moses Austin gained permission from Mexican authorities to establish the first Anglo colony in Texas. His son, Stephen F. Austin, soon led three hundred families from Missouri down the Texas Road in Indian Territory to settle in the new land. The city of Austin is named in his honor.



**President James K. Polk added a vast area to the United States, but that expansion brought renewed debate over slavery.**





United States gained all the southwest territories, and Mexico gave up its claims to Texas in exchange for \$15 million. Five years later, the disputed southern border of the United States was settled with the Gadsden Purchase. This, combined with migrations to the West, fulfilled the country's manifest destiny. By the late 1840s, through purchase, annexation, treaty, and conquest, the United States controlled all of the land between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and between Canada and the Rio Grande.

## Map 25 Territorial Expansion

**Map Skill:** What states were "completed" by the Gadsden Purchase?

## Impressions of Indian Territory

This westward movement meant that more people came into Indian Territory. Soon after the Indian Removal Act was signed in 1830, Captain Benjamin Booneville was commissioned to explore the country along the Canadian River from Arkansas to the Cross Timbers. He was impressed with a 65-foot-high by 20-foot-diameter rock in the Canadian River, but otherwise found little of value. "I saw no place where I believe a settlement could be made to advantage . . . destitute of water, skirted with scrub and black oak . . . no minerals . . . little game



... barren waste" was Booneville's general viewpoint of the Indian Territory.

In 1839, Dr. Josiah Gregg traveled hundreds of miles from Fort Smith to Santa Fe and on to Chihuahua, Mexico, with merchandise he hoped to trade with the Mexicans. Writing of his travels in *The Commerce of the Prairies*, Gregg described the eastern half of the territory as, "an unbroken succession of grassy plains and fertile glades, intersected here and there with woody belts and numerous rivulets."

In 1845, Lieutenants James Abert and William Peck led an expedition across the Territory, arriving at the site of the deserted Camp Holmes. Though the camp had been abandoned for several years, they found a gate post, pieces of wagons, and a still-standing chimney. Abert reported, "Some of our people, in the height of their enthusiasm, mounted the chimney, and unfurled the American handkerchief that it might float in the breeze."

Abert also reported on the available wood, water, and grass in the Territory. He wrote of feral hogs his men

encountered in the Creek Nation and of large flocks of the Carolina parakeet (a bird now extinct) near present-day Webbers Falls. His men traveled through a prairie fire and saw evidence of "the amazing force of the whirling winds" of a tornado. Abert left a valuable collection of paintings and sketches of what he saw in the Indian Territory, including the Kiowa chief Dohasan.



**Above:** The Carolina parakeet, the only North American member of the parrot family, is now extinct. This print is by John James Audubon. **Opposite page, above:** The battle of Chapultepec Castle was the last battle of the Mexican-American War.

## Something Extra!

Standing Rock, the rock Captain Booneville saw, was covered with water when Lake Eufaula was built in the 1960s.

## It's Your Turn

1. What were the two different "uses" on either side of the Louisiana Purchase buffer zone?
2. With what country did the United States have a dispute over the Oregon Territory?



## Section 2

# Crossing the Territory

### As you read, look for

- the various routes travelers took westward, including those through Indian Territory,
- methods of transportation used by travelers,
- vocabulary terms **station**, **caravan**, **transcontinental railroad**, and **contract**.

**Canoes** were a popular way to travel on Indian Territory's rivers and streams.

**Whenever possible, the early traders and travelers used the rivers** to get from place to place. It was easier to travel by boat mainly in the eastern part of the Territory, where the rivers were deeper and rainfall was more abundant. The usually abundant rainfall of spring and early summer made those the best times to use the rivers, although too much





rain and floods created their own problems. Many boats sank in the sometimes turbulent, log-jammed waters.

Early commercial craft included canoes and keelboats. Keelboats could transport large amounts of supplies, Indians, and troops. Steamboats soon began to navigate the Arkansas and Red rivers. The *Scioto* and the *Velocipede* were two of the first steamboats to travel to Fort Gibson in 1827. In 1831, the steamboat *Enterprise*, commanded by Captain Hawley, successfully traveled the Red River to the mouth of the Kiamichi.

## Trailblazing

Many of the first trails used by white people actually followed buffalo or other animal paths, or trails Indians had used for hundreds of years to go between camps or to find food and water. Early Spanish priests, traders, and trappers followed an old Spanish trail from Natchitoches, Louisiana, up the Red River to present-day Tillman County, then northwest to Santa Fe. "This was an ancient trail deeply cut and rutted by heavy Mexican cart wheels," Simon Cockrell later testified at a hearing concerning the Oklahoma-Texas boundary.

## The Santa Fe Trail

The 1848 discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in California caused a flood of people to make the journey to the West Coast. A few traveled by ship around the tip of South America (which took about a year),

**Independence, Missouri, was a "jumping-off place" for those who used the Santa Fe Trail to head westward. This engraving shows wagons gathering for a wagon train.**





# Spotlight

## Santa Fe Trail

**Good, life-sustaining water in the semiarid Plains was a huge factor in locating the Santa Fe Trail.** Refreshing water was found on the trail at several springs and creeks, which made the Cimarron Route passable.

The Santa Fe was originally a trading route used by the Kiowa, Ute, Comanche, Apache, and other tribes. Spanish explorer Francisco de Coronado was probably the first European to travel portions of the Santa Fe Trail in 1541. William Becknell is credited with being the first to haul freight on the trail by mule train in 1821 and with wagons in 1822.

German physician Frederick A. Wislizenus traveled the Santa Fe Trail in 1846. He described the Cold Springs on the Cimarron Route as the “best water since the Arkansas. . . . Beyond Cold Springs the scenery is beautiful where mountains and prairie meet.” The area around Cold Springs was a well-known campsite where travelers could rest, care for lame animals, mend broken wagons, and prepare for further travel.

Over the years, it became a novelty for travelers to chisel their names in the nearby sandstone bluffs. Soldiers, teamsters (those who handled teams of animals), merchants, gold seekers, and adventurers trying to regain their health in an arid land all left their marks. There are over 1,200 signatures scattered at five sites in Cimarron County. The oldest dated name is “T. Potts 1806.” The most popular name is F. B. Delgado, one of the owners of a mule-and-ox team that carried freight on the trail; he left his signature many times. The majority of the names are at two locations—Autograph Rock and Signature Rock—both located on Cold Spring Creek about a mile apart.

# Something Extra!

**Autograph Rock and Cold Springs are now part of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Located on private property, visitors may view the carved names and immediate area at certain times.**

but most made the 4-6 month journey on horseback or wagon along dangerous, rugged trails across the continent.

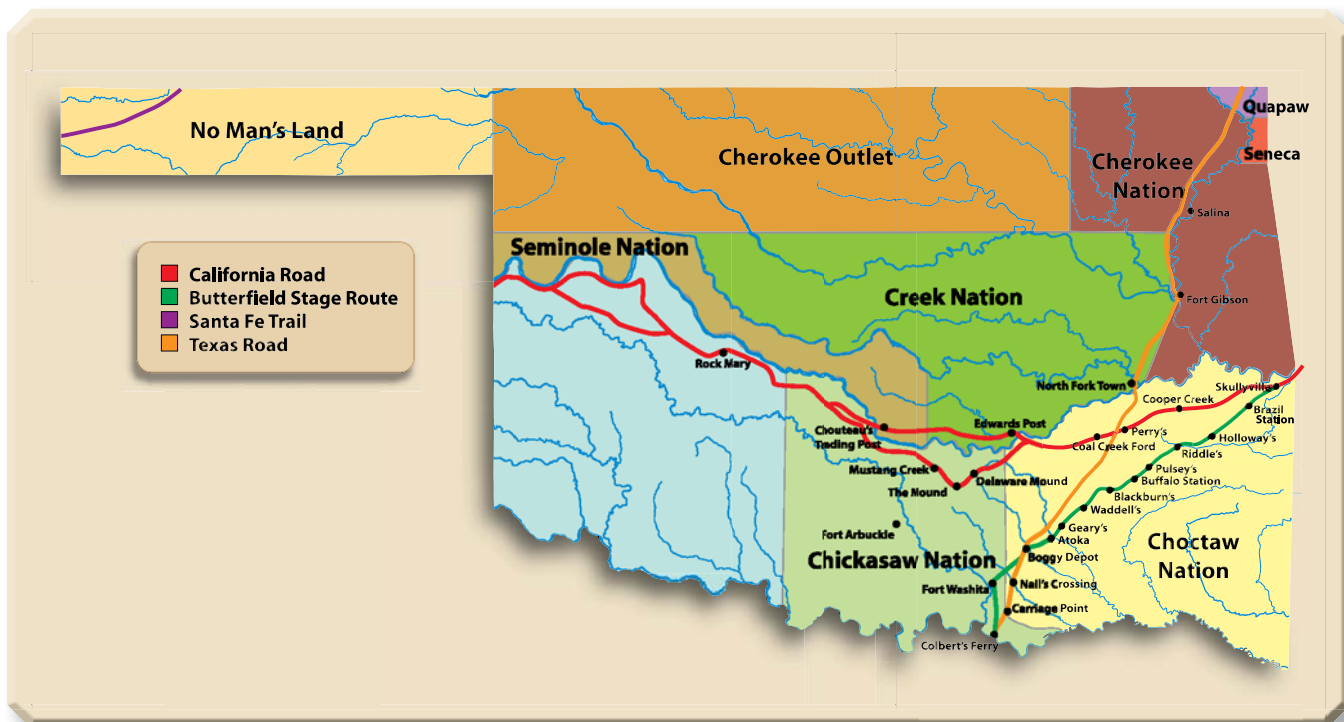
Many overland travelers headed for California followed southern trails, such as the Santa Fe Trail, which began in Independence, Missouri. In spite of the lack of reliable water, most travelers chose the Cimarron Route of the Santa Fe Trail, which cut through the Oklahoma Panhandle. (The Cimarron Route was about 60 miles, or 10 days, shorter than the route through the Rocky Mountains.)

William Becknell, a Missouri trader, led the first wagon train pulled by mules on the Santa Fe Trail in 1821. The route became so

important for traders and those hauling freight that Congress authorized George Sibley to survey and mark it in 1825. Military supplies were often transported on the Santa Fe Trail, and dragoons patrolled it for raiders.

Thousands of people, horses, mules, oxen, and wagons traveled on the Santa Fe Trail, until the coming of the railroads led to its demise (end) in the 1870s. The deeply cut tracks made by the wagon wheels can still be seen in the Oklahoma Panhandle. Many worn-out travelers carved their names on sandstone rock while they rested and drank the refreshing water at Cold Springs.





### The Texas Road

People leaving St. Louis and heading to the Indian Territory, Texas, or Santa Fe often followed the Osage Trace. The Osage Trace passed by what is now Vinita, then followed the Grand River by Salina and Fort Gibson, on to Perryville (near McAlester) and Boggy Depot, and into Texas. (Highway 69 roughly follows this route today.)

As white traders and settlers headed west and south, the Osage Trace came to be called the Texas Road. In 1846, Lieutenant James Abert reported, "The way from Fort Gibson was literally lined with wagons of emigrants to Texas and from this time until we arrived at Saint Louis, we continued daily to see hundreds of them."

Stagecoach drivers could trade for fresh horses and passengers could find refreshments and lodging at several **stations** (regular stopping places) located on the Texas Road. There were six stations on the Texas Road between Fort Gibson and Baxter Springs (Kansas), and others were located between Fort Gibson and the Red River.

### The California Road

In 1849, Captain Randolph B. Marcy and troops escorted five hundred gold seekers from Fort Smith to Santa Fe. People gathered at Fort Smith from as far away as New York with their wagons, oxen, and mules. At Fort Smith, they restocked supplies, made repairs, and waited for the **caravan** (a procession of wagons traveling in single file) to head west.

Marcy and his caravan set out on the 819-mile journey to Santa Fe on April 4. On good days, the caravan traveled up to 15 miles a day, but on mountainous or rough terrain they made as little as 4 miles.

## Map 26 Early Trails

**Map Skill:** What river did the California Road follow?

## Something Extra!

Vinita in Craig County was founded as a railroad town named Downingville in 1871. It was renamed Vinita for Vinnie Ream, who sculpted the statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Capitol in Washington, D.C.





**Captain Randolph B. Marcy's** guidebook, *The Prairie Traveler*, was approved by the U.S. War Department.

## Something Extra!

Graves along the trails were sometimes marked with simple crosses, stones, or other markers. But most graves on the trail were unmarked to keep them from being disturbed and looted.

The caravan also had to stop and camp while waiting out heavy rains and storms. The expedition reached Santa Fe on June 28. Marcy left the caravan at Santa Fe and returned to Fort Smith. (With no wagon road west of Santa Fe, the caravan traveled south 300 miles, near El Paso, before again heading west on the Gila River Trail.) Marcy's trail from Fort Smith to Santa Fe later became known as the California Road.

Landmarks and distinguishable physical features helped guide the travelers. A sandstone butte about five miles south of present-day Hydro was one such landmark. One of the travelers with the Marcy group was 17-year-old Mary Conway, granddaughter of Arkansas Governor Conway and cousin of President James Madison. Upon spotting the landmark, several young officers, eager to impress Mary, raced to the hill, raised an American flag, and proclaimed the hill "Rock Mary" in her honor. Major Enoch Steen, surveying the road in 1858, named the sandstone hills near Rock Mary "Steen's Buttes."

## Other California Trails

Captain L. Evans led another expedition of 130 people and 40 wagons that departed from Fayetteville, Arkansas, on April 20, 1849. On a new Cherokee Trail, they traveled through the Cherokee Nation, crossed the Grand River at Salina and the Verdigris near present-day Claremore, and headed northwest until they got on the Santa Fe Trail.

At the fork of the new Cherokee Trail and the Santa Fe, they engraved a rock, "To Fayetteville, Ark., 300 miles—Capt. Evans' Com'y, May 12, 1849." They also left an oil-cloth envelope containing their journal of the trip, and asked whoever found it to forward it to a St. Louis newspaper. Amazingly, someone did deliver the envelope, and the article was published in the St. Louis *Republican* on July 2 and in the *Arkansas Gazette* on July 26, 1849.

Another California route through Indian Territory went from Fort Smith along the California Trail until it came to Coal Creek. From there, it turned southwest to El Paso, Texas, then west again.

## Traveling the Trails

Caravan after caravan of wagons headed west on both the southern routes through Indian Territory and the more northern Oregon Trail. Parties heading east in June 1850 estimated there were 75,000 westbound immigrants on the upper trails and another 25,000 on the southern routes. Regardless of the route, all the immigrants faced great hardships, and many died and were buried along the trails.



Captain Marcy wrote a handbook, *The Prairie Traveler*, for people traveling to California. He recommended routes and items that should be taken. He wrote that wagons needed to be simple, but the top had to be strong enough to withstand the sun and weather. His experience proved that oxen were better suited to withstand the drastic weather variations and the length of the journey than were mules or horses. He recommended the following supplies for each person: 150 pounds of flour, 25 pounds of pork, 15 pounds of coffee, 25 pounds of sugar, yeast for making bread, salt, pepper, butter in tins, dried vegetables, citric acid to prevent scurvy, and other medicines such as quinine, opium, and a laxative. Only the most essential pots, pans, bedding, and tools were suggested, plus a few spare parts for the inevitable wagon breakdowns. Weapons were also essential for protection and for killing game to eat.

The immigrants weren't the only ones affected by the westward travels. Fort Smith and other points of departure faced supply shortages. Arkansas and other states grew concerned that the large number of people leaving threatened to drain them of people and money. The slavery issue became part of the discussion

over whether the northern or southern routes were better. The northern routes usually received more publicity, even though the milder weather on the southern routes allowed for a longer traveling window.

In 1851, Marcy was told to establish a military post further west to protect the white immigrants and traders and to maintain peace among the Indians. He selected a site south of the Canadian River (near present-day Byars, McClain County) for Camp Arbuckle. Later that year,

## Focus on the Economy

### Economics on the Prairie

**In 1859-1860, Edward F. Beale led an expedition to survey a route for a wagon road from Fort Smith westward along the Canadian River to the Colorado River. The party purchased corn and hunted and fished along the way. Following are excerpts from the journal on their efforts to buy corn.**

*After crossing the Canadian we encamped at the town of North Fork (a Creek settlement), which we found an insignificant village. Here we found corn had advanced from its usual rates of two bits to a dollar a bushel; of course, there had been a short crop, a drought, an unusual demand—in fact, a thousand plausible reasons were given for this increased price—but the true one kept far out of sight, which was that a government train and its quartermaster's drafts were on the road.*

*... I started this morning in advance in order to try and get corn at a cheaper rate than the agent of the government agent offered it to me, which was one dollar and a half a bushel. After a ride of thirty-five miles I came to Jim Graham's, an Indian, where I was well received, and who, not being a contractor, sold me corn at seventy-five cents a bushel. Being in such good hands, we spent the night with Jim comfortably. ... Arrived at Little river. At this place I found a trading house belonging to Mr. Aird (Thomas Aird was an Indian trader at the Edward's Trading Post), and was received by him with kindness and hospitality. ... He readily sold us corn at a dollar, being a third less than we were offered it by others, and in everything we purchased of him we found the prices a great reduction on those of North Fork.*

**Source: "Survey of a Wagon Road from Fort Smith to the Colorado River." *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. 12, No. 1, March 1934.**



at Marcy's suggestion, the camp was moved thirty miles southwest to the Washita River and renamed Fort Arbuckle (located west of Davis).

## Railroad Survey

Beginning in the 1840s there was a great deal of interest and talk of a **transcontinental railroad** (a railroad that spans the continent from ocean to ocean). As the United States increased its territory, the discussions grew even more intense. People from northern states wanted the railroad in the northern part of the country, while southerners favored a southern route. The vast Indian Territory, which included the area north of Texas all the way to Canada, was now in the center of the country rather than on its western border. Before 1854, the unorganized territory in the United States included almost 500,000 square miles north of what became Oklahoma, and over 50,000 square miles in what became our state. Any transcontinental route other than an extreme southern one would have to cross this immense territory.

One proposal called for relocating the Five Tribes and other Indians to the area of the Dakotas. Two other suggestions included securing a passageway through the territory and forming an Indian state. The end result of the discussions was the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. That act divided the territory north of Oklahoma into two separate, organized territories—Kansas and Nebraska. As organized territories, Kansas and Nebraska were opened to white settlers, and the door was opened for a railroad. Unhappy with an unorganized area on the west, which guaranteed tribes freedom from state or territorial control, Senator Robert Johnson of Arkansas introduced a bill in

1854 that would have organized what is now Oklahoma. No action was taken on Johnson's bill, although efforts continued to open the territory of the Five Tribes until the Civil War broke out.

With the new expansion of land and the massive migrations west, Congress authorized the War Department to conduct surveys in 1853 to find the most practical and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis (future president of the Confederacy) oversaw the surveys.

One proposed route from Memphis to the Pacific Ocean ran along the 35th parallel, somewhat south of the Canadian River. Lieutenant Amiel W. Whipple, a topographical engineer, directed that survey, which began July 14, 1853, at Fort Smith. His party included engineers, geologists, astronomers, and surveyors; naturalists J. M. Bigelow, J. Marcou, and Caleb Kennerly; and German topographer and artist H. B.



**H. B. Mollhausen** painted this picture of an Indian on horseback. Mollhausen accompanied the surveying party led by Lieutenant Amiel W. Whipple.



(Baldwin) Mollhausen. The party followed the Canadian River through the Panhandle of Texas, then on to Albuquerque (New Mexico). They reached the Pueblo de los Angeles (Los Angeles) on March 20, 1854.

Whipple made a number of interesting observations in the Indian Territory. The party found a large settlement of Shawnee Indians with well-cultivated fields. Whipple bought several head of cattle from Jesse Chisholm (the famous half-Cherokee guide and scout) and noted the seven Mexican slaves Chisholm had bought from the Comanche. The survey party passed by a settlement of several hundred Delaware Indians and their chief, Black Beaver. Neither Chisholm nor Black Beaver would sign on as guide for the Whipple group. Near Mustang Creek, the survey party found a trail used by Indians going to Chouteau's trading post, a route that they reported would make an easy railroad grade.

In fact, Whipple concluded that the entire route from Fort Smith to California would be excellent for a railroad. Whipple estimated it would cost over \$169 million to build the railroad on the 35th parallel, compared to \$69 million for the least expensive estimate. Only later was it discovered that a simple mathematical error had almost doubled Whipple's actual figure.

North and South rivalries played a large part in delaying the building of the railroad. After the Civil War began and the southern states seceded, the Union passed the first of several railroad acts that favored a northern route. While the route through the Indian Territory wasn't selected for the transcontinental railroad, the survey parties gathered an enormous amount of information. The five railroad surveys provided an excellent picture of the western United States in the 1850s.

## Butterfield Overland Mail

The invention of the telegraph in the 1840s had greatly improved communications, but those telegraph lines didn't cover the newly expanded United States. To fill in the large gaps between lines, messages were sent by mail, which was carried by stagecoach. The stagecoach also carried several passengers and, between 1850 and 1870, was the primary form of public transportation.

John Butterfield of Missouri was president of the Overland Mail Company. In 1858, Butterfield won the contract to carry mail between the Mississippi valley and California. (A **contract** is a formal, legally binding agreement between two or more parties.) Butterfield's company owned more than 100 Concord coaches (each of which could carry 6



An H. B. Mollhausen painting of a Choctaw couple.

## Something Extra!

In 1844, the first telegraph message was sent over a wire line from Baltimore, Maryland, to Washington, D.C.



passengers), 1,000 horses, and 500 mules; it employed almost 800 men.

The Butterfield Stage route entered Oklahoma near Fort Smith and continued southwest to Boggy Depot, where it crossed the Texas Road. From Boggy Depot, the stage route went south to Colbert's Ferry and across the Red River. Stations were located at regular intervals along

the route so that tired horses and mules could be quickly exchanged for fresh ones. In Indian Territory, the company made arrangements with the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations to maintain the stations. The two nations had passed laws that required citizens to work a certain number of days on public highways.

There was not enough money or people to maintain the many trails, so a toll system was used, as was customary in other parts of the country. The Choctaw toll rates were: "For each four wheeled wagon, or other vehicle, drawn by four or more horses, mules, or oxen with

driver, the sum of Fifty cents; For each four wheeled wagon, . . . drawn by one or two horses, . . . Twenty-five cents; For each man and horse, the sum of Ten cents; and for each animal in every drove of cattle, horses, mules, hogs, or sheep, One cent."

A New York newspaper reporter, Waterman Ormsby, rode the stage on its first run. Ormsby reported, "We forded the Poteau at Fort Smith, and for the first time since our departure from St. Louis I had an opportunity to sleep in the wagon. . . . It took some time to get accustomed to the jolting over the rough road, the rocks and log bridges; but three days steady riding, without sleep, helped me get used to it. . . ."

The first stop in the Indian Territory was in the Choctaw Nation, about sixteen miles from the river. Ormsby noted the Choctaw owned large herds of cattle but did little farming. The stations, sometimes sixteen miles apart, could be reached in two-and-a-half hours. The reporter noticed many tall posts for stickball in the plains areas, which were becoming more frequent.

The stagecoach, traveling continuously, made very good time. Near Blackburn's station, about sixty miles from the Red River, the stage entered a "patch of woods, through which the road was tortuous and stony," Ormsby wrote. He continued,



**This painting by Joe Beeler shows a Butterfield Overland stagecoach stopping at Boggy Depot.**

## Something Extra!

**The Choctaw built a bridge across Limestone Creek and charged a toll to pass, creating Oklahoma's first toll bridge.**



*But our driver's ambition to make good time overcame his caution, and away he went, bounding over the stones at a fearful rate. The moon shone brightly, but its light was obstructed by the trees, and the driver had to rely much on his knowledge of the road for a guide. To see the heavy mail wagon whizzing and whirling over the jagged rocks, through such a labyrinth, in comparative darkness, and to feel oneself bouncing now on the hard seat, now against the roof, and now against the side of the wagon, was no joke, I assure you, though I can truthfully say that I rather liked the excitement of the thing. But it was too dangerous to be continued without an accident, and soon two heavy thumps and a bound of the wagon, that unseated us all, and a crashing sound denoted that something had broken.*

Thinking it was only a broken seat, they continued to the station, where they realized the wagon tongue was split. Repairs were soon made, and they were on the way again, arriving shortly at Colbert's Ferry.

The trip from St. Louis by train 160 miles to Tipton, Missouri, then by stagecoach to Sherman, Texas, just across the Red River from Colbert's Ferry—a total of 673 miles—had taken four days and six hours. The total trip from St. Louis to San Francisco—2,795 miles—took almost 25 days.

In 1860, the Pony Express proved to be an even faster way to deliver mail, but the Civil War interrupted plans for a Butterfield pony express service. After the war, stagecoaches once again traveled the Butterfield Stage route for a few years until railroad travel took over.

Not yet even one hundred years old, the young nation would soon be involved in a horrific war that expanded across the lands as fast as the settlers had, and with equally destructive consequences.



**Frederic Remington** created this painting of a stagecoach coming down a rough road.

### It's Your Turn

1. Why do you suppose Lieutenant Whipple's party included naturalists?
2. Why did the railroad surveys begin at the Mississippi River?

### Something Extra!

The cost of riding the Butterfield Stage from San Francisco to St. Louis was \$200 in gold.

# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

- White settlers from the north, east, and south continued to head west in search of new lives and new lands.
- John L. O’Sullivan coined the term *manifest destiny* to explain the western movement of settlers.
- Whenever possible, early traders and settlers used rivers to travel west. The discovery of gold in California escalated the number of immigrants heading west. Several trails the travelers used led through Indian Territory.
- Those people traveling west relied on landmarks and physical features as guides as well as the handbook *The Prairie Traveler*.
- Surveys were conducted to determine the feasibility of building a transcontinental railroad. One of the proposed routes went through Indian Territory. Lieutenant Amiel Whipple led that survey.
- Both the Butterfield Overland Stage and the Pony Express were used during this period to transport mail.

## Vocabulary

Define, identify or explain the importance of the following words and how they relate to manifest destiny.

1. annex
2. buffer zone
3. California trails
4. caravan
5. expansion
6. immigrants
7. steamboats
8. transcontinental railroad

## Understanding the Facts

1. What is manifest destiny?
2. What event in California increased the number of settlers crossing Indian Territory?
3. What was the most common means of moving supplies and people in Indian Territory at this time?
4. Why was the transcontinental railroad route across Indian Territory initially ruled out?
5. What was the name of the first cross-continental stagecoach company and what did it carry?

## Developing Critical Thinking

1. Do you believe Americans had the right to settle western lands? What assumptions did the idea of manifest destiny make about the rights of Indians and others to this land?
2. What factors could have accounted for a visitor’s first impression of the area that became Oklahoma?
3. Why was a transcontinental railroad so important to the United States?

## Applying Your Skills

1. Do the following map exercise:
  - a. Trace the outline of the state of Oklahoma and draw and label the following rivers on your map: Arkansas, Cimarron, Beaver/North Canadian, Canadian, Washita, North Fork of the Red, and Red.
  - b. On the same map, use three different colors to trace the three major trails that crossed Indian Territory in the mid-1800s. Make a legend that shows the name of the trail and the color you used.
  - c. On the same map, locate and label Salina, Perryville, Boggy Depot, and Rock Mary.



2. Pretend you are a wagon master. Make a list of provisions your wagon train will need to travel from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Compare this to the supplies you would need today to make that same trip.

### Exploring Technology

1. Using the website [pikepass.com](http://pikepass.com), make a chart showing the tolls charged for a car to travel from the beginning to the end on the

following turnpikes: Will Rogers, Turner, Cherokee, Cimarron, Creek, Muskogee, Indian Nation, Chickasaw, H. E. Bailey, and Kilpatrick. Compare your findings to what the Choctaw charged to use public highways on their land.

2. Using your favorite search engine, research the transcontinental railroad. Discuss the plans, hardships, and completion of this railroad that spanned half of the United States.

## Building Skills Using Mileage Charts

**When planning a trip, it is important to determine the mileage from one place to another in order to calculate how long the trip will take, how much gas will be used, and which route will be the most convenient.**

Many road maps provide a mileage chart similar to the one that follows. To find the mileage between two points, identify the city that represents your starting point on either the left or the top of the chart. Then match it to your destination city on the other side of the chart. Read across the chart to the column when your two cities intersect. The box at that point gives the number of miles between the two cities. For example, the distance from Ada to Boise City is 423 miles.

Determine the mileage for each of the following trips:

1. Woodward to Enid
2. Ada to Tulsa
3. Norman to Oklahoma City
4. McAlester to Bartlesville
5. Oklahoma City to Ardmore
6. Stillwater to Boise City
7. Lawton to Norman
8. Tulsa to Boise City
9. Bartlesville to Enid
10. Woodward to Ardmore
11. Oklahoma City to Enid to Boise City
12. Tulsa to Bartlesville to Enid
13. Ada to Oklahoma City to Stillwater
14. Tulsa to Woodward to Lawton
15. Lawton to Norman to McAlester

	Ada	Ardmore	Enid	Lawton	McAlester	Norman	Stillwater	Tulsa
Bartlesville	173	238	132	238	139	171	132	46
Boise City	423	428	275	351	464	350	484	393
Norman	83	79	102	81	115		81	125
Oklahoma City	88	99	83	87	124	18	65	105
Tulsa	127	190	117	191	93	125	65	
Woodward	224	237	88	170	261	159	144	204