

Settlement of the West



Railroads Help Settlers Move West

- 1862: federal govt distributes 180m acres to railroad companies for free to encourage construction
(Amount equivalent in size to land in Texas and Oklahoma)
- Federal land policy + transcontinental railroads = rapid settlement of the West
- Two RR companies race to lay RR track:

1. Union Pacific
2. Central Pacific



-The Central Pacific and Union Pacific tracks meet at Promontory Point, Utah 10 May 1869, completing the Transcontinental Railroad



-RR Laborers:

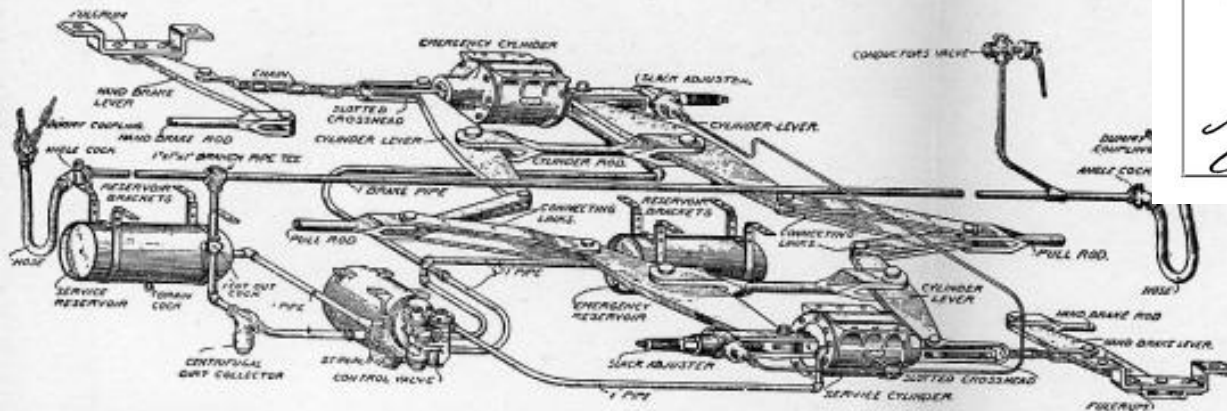
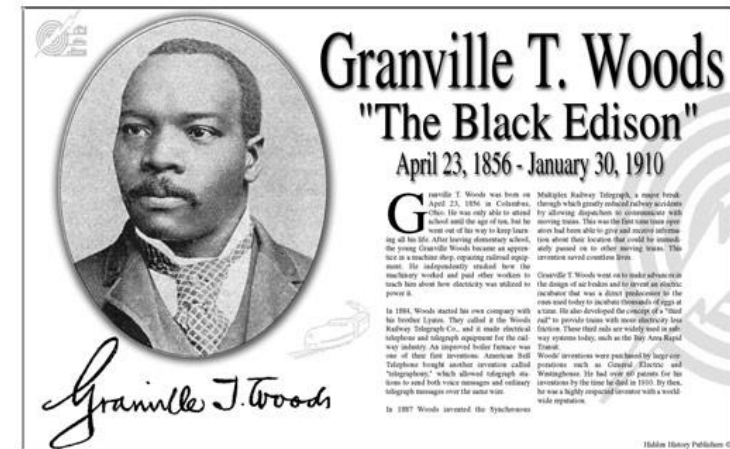
1. Civil War vets
2. Irish immigrants
3. Chinese immigrants
4. Blacks



Inventions Improving the RRs

- 1856: steel replaced iron rails
- 1869: George Westinghouse invents the air brake
- 1883: standardized time zones replaced thousands of local time zones
- 1887: Granville Woods invents the telegraph system

All above made it easier to ship goods



The PC Passenger Car Brake Equipment.

Cylinders Pointing in opposite directions.

Cattle Ranching

- RRs made it easier to ship cattle East but the process was getting them to major RR line
- Long “drives”, harsh conditions, stampedes, low wages
- Hispanic or black cowboys were common
- Main type of cattle: Texas Longhorn



Problems on the Range

- “Open Range” system used until the invention of barbed wire
- Natural disasters also hurt industry:
 - 1880s: 90% cattle killed in blizzard
- Ranchers went bankrupt & “big business” acquired land and cattle



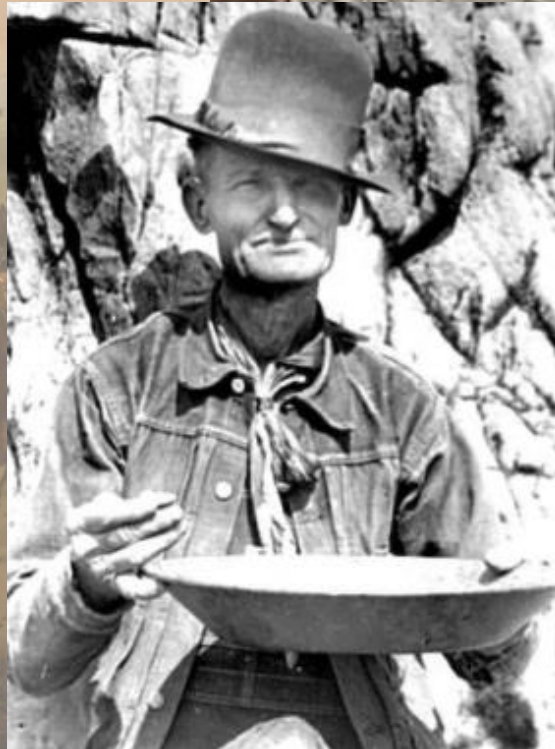
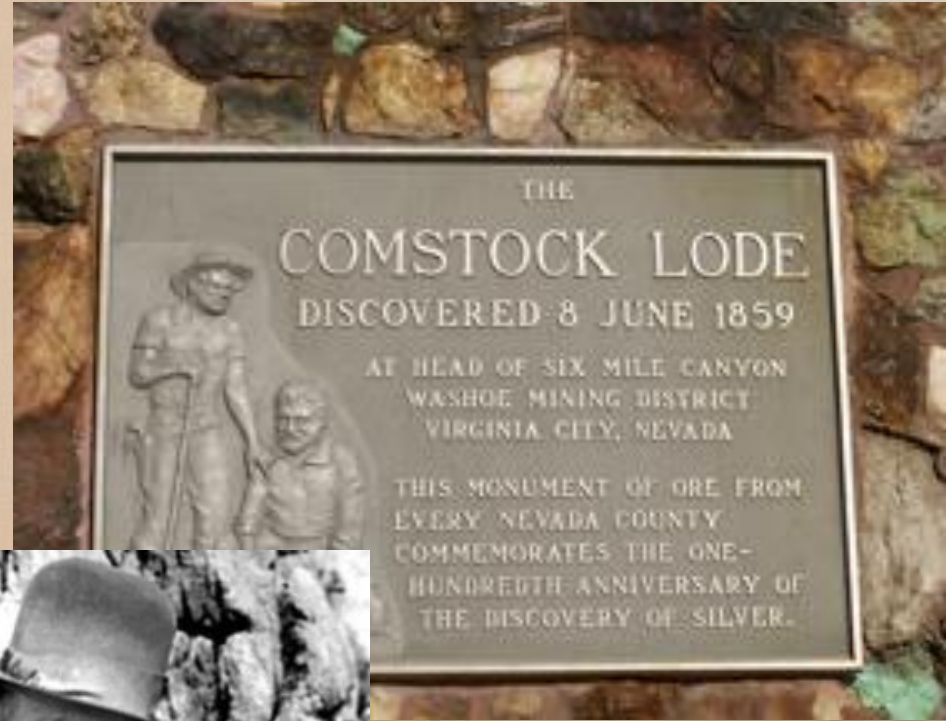
Mining Strikes

-1859: “Comstock Lode” hit; large silver strike that lured people out West

-Problems:

-Mining towns carried bad reputations

-Most miners did not “strike it rich” as was the rumor— large corporations bought up ore deposits → payed miners for labor



Government Help Settlers Move West

-Homestead Act of 1862: passed by Congress offering 160 acres of “free” land to any citizen or head of household; must improve land within 5 years

1. 1862-1900: over 600,000 families took advantage
2. “Exodusters”- black families who moved from the South to Kansas

-Problems:

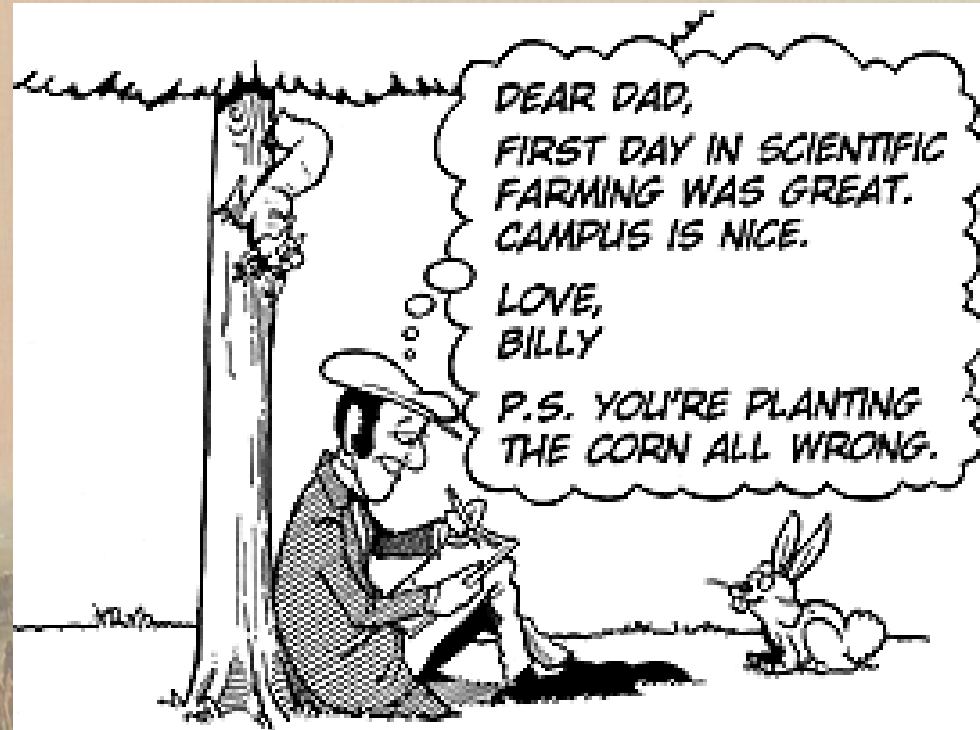
1. RR companies & govt buy up/withold land
2. Cattlemen fence off land
3. Miners & woodcutters claim natural resources



Educating Farmers

- Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 & 1890: federal govt gives land to states to establish agricultural colleges
- Hatch Act of 1887: establishes experimental “stations” for development of new agricultural tools

Great Plains earns nickname: “*The Breadbasket of the Nation*”



Courtesy [Iowa State University](#).

Land grant universities were founded to be open to students of all social classes, to research and teach agriculture and other practical subjects, and to share the knowledge. But, there may have been some parents who weren't thrilled with some of the results.

Agricultural Support through the 1800s

1837: John Deere invents steel plow

Cyrus McCormick invents the mechanical reaper

1841: grain drill manufactured in U.S. to plant seed

1869: spring-tooth harrow patented to prep soil

1874: Joseph Glidden invents barbed wire

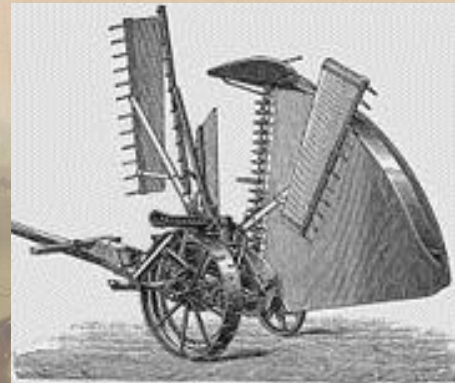
1878: corn binder-reaper becomes available

-Outcome:

1. More grain available to wider market

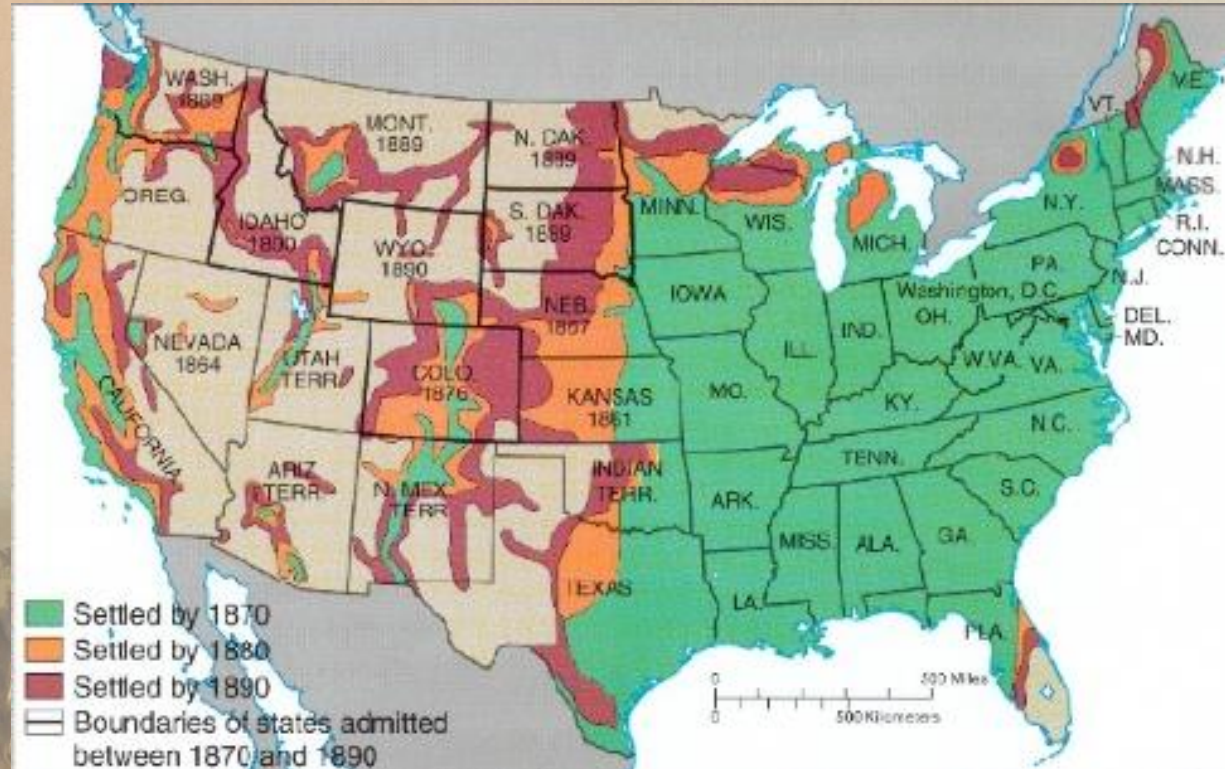
1830: busheling took 183 min

1900: busheling took 10 min

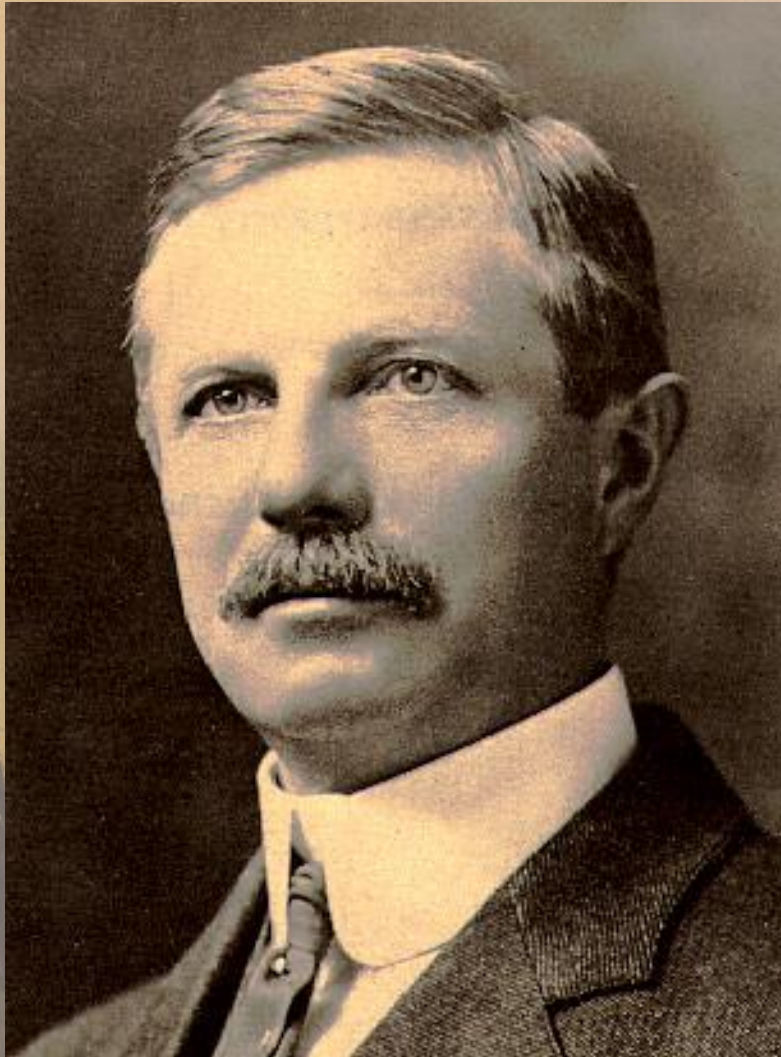


“Closing of the Frontier”

- 1872: federal govt creates Yellowstone National Park
- 1879: federal govt RR companies were forced to give up landholdings in the west to settlers through a “forfeiture land resolution”
- 1890: U.S. Census Bureau declared the American frontier “no longer existed”



“The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (aka “Frontier Thesis”)



- Frederick Jackson Turner
- Stressed that the availability of free land and influence of the frontier had played a major role in development of democracy in the U.S.
- Thesis attempted to answer the question of what would happen to the nation now that the possibility of free land and a new life in the West was vanishing?

Visual Summary: The American West

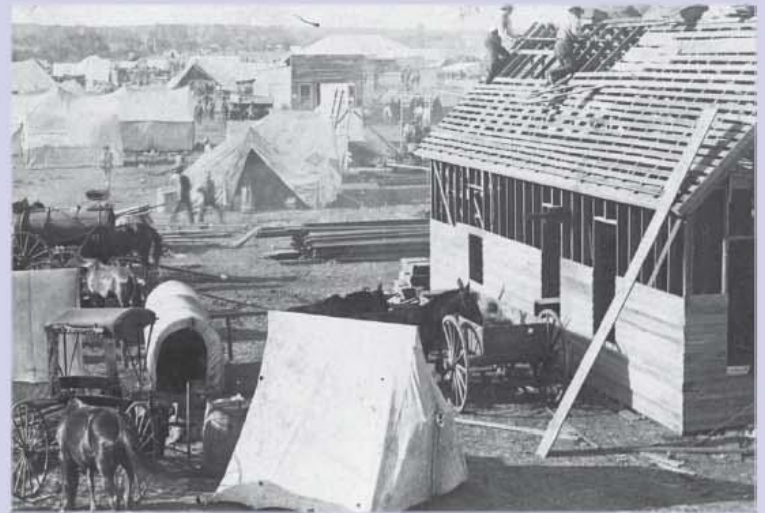
Cause

- Westward Expansion



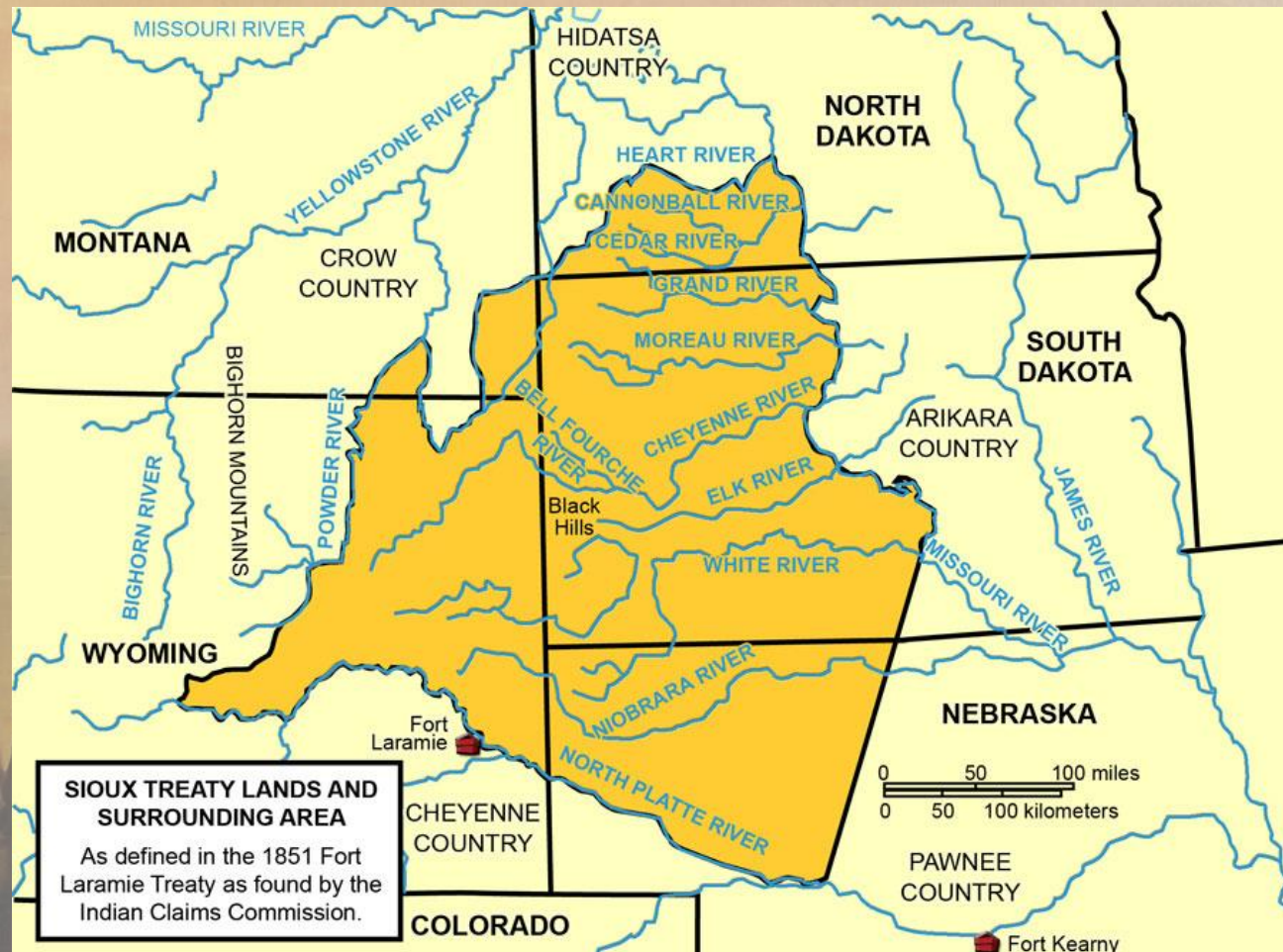
Effects

- Native Americans were massacred, sent to reservations, their lands stolen, their culture destroyed
- Mining boom created new towns and businesses
- Cattle boom created new trails and ranches
- Farmers settled the Plains, building communities



Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851

- Plains Indians are guaranteed free roam of the Great Plains



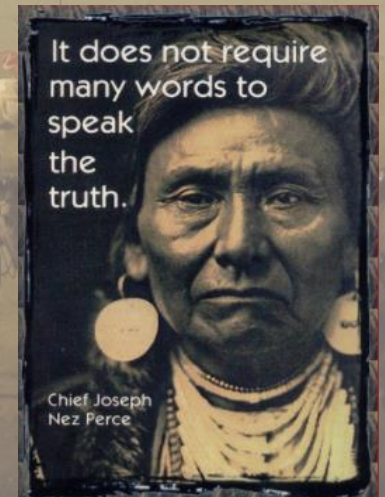
Policy of Concentration (1860)

- Plains Indians will be put on reservations

- Sioux Uprising of 1862 (Abraham Lincoln & Homestead Act)

Major Confrontations

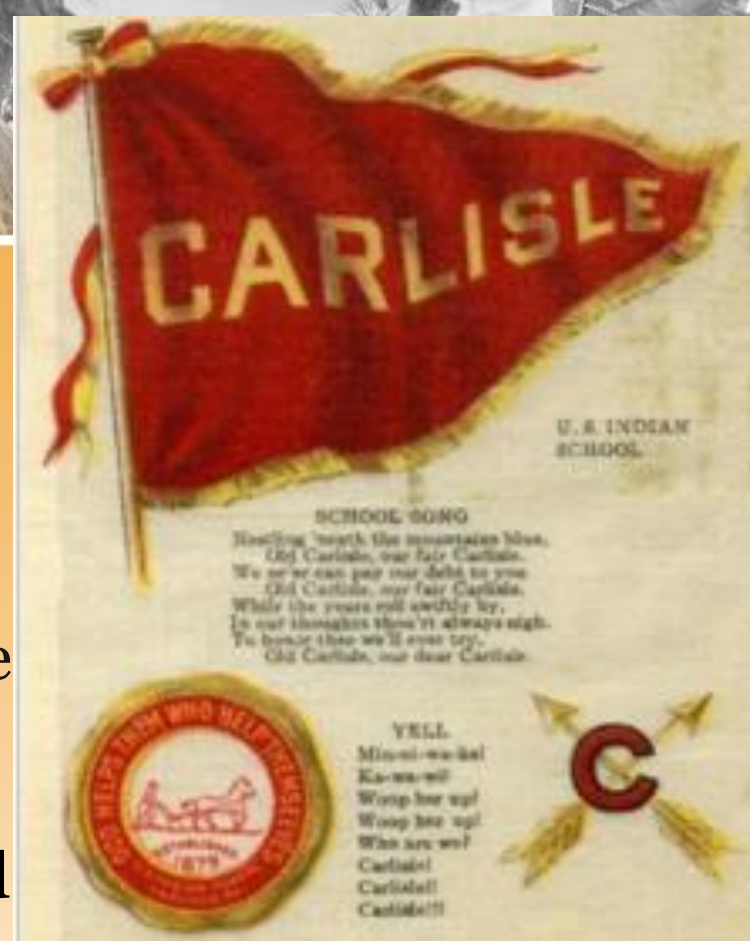
- Chivington's Sand Creek Massacre (1864): 150-200 Cheyenne killed
- Little Big Horn (1876): 7th Cavalry led by George Armstrong Custer wiped out by Sitting Bull and a mixture of Sioux and Cheyenne
- Nez Perce: peaceful tribe attempted to escape to Canada led by Chief Joseph - 1,000 mile journey before surrendering "*I will fight no more forever*"
- Wounded Knee (1890): last confrontation of the Lakota to put a stop to the "Ghost Dance" (spiritual movement)
 - 290 killed





Dawes Severalty Act 1887

- Provided NAs with 160 acres of land per family
- Given a land allotment with the requirement to have "adopted the habits of civilized life" (lived separate and apart from the tribe) and become a U.S. citizen
- Act forced many NAs off of their land and on to worse plots of land
- Sent NA children to boarding schools (e.g. - Carlisle Industrial School)
- Provided the white settlers with much more and better quality land



Effect of The Dawes Act

Before the Dawes Act, NAs owned about 150 million acres of land

After the Dawes Act, the land was divided up, and the NAs lost about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the land

The land was then given to Natives who could use the land for either farming or grazing

The rest of the land was divided up between white settlers

