

- Most people are not living in the west at this time
  - Living in the west is sort of an ideal or a dream
  - Manifest desitiny?
- By 1870s, there are 5 transcontinental railroads
  - Because of railroads, a fixed time reference is necessary
  - Railroad companies push for standardized times (time zones)
    - \* Happens first in the US because of the huge railroads
    - \* Later picked up in Great Britain
- Homestead acts convey lands to people
  - About half is gone quickly to speculators
  - Only about 1/9 acres goes to an individual farmer
  - Mostly corporate investments
  - Series of follow up acts
    - \* Timber culture act
      - Extra 160 acres if you plant trees
    - \* Desert land act
      - Just irrigate it within three years
      - Lots of fraudulent claims
    - \* Newlands act (National Reclamation Act)
- Most of the settling is during the Gilded Age
  - Government lead by Republicans
- Depressed economic conditions in south
  - Many of the now freed blacks move out to the west
  - Exodusers or Exodusters since they move to the dusty area
  - Several black towns settled
  - Mostly fail due to lack of capital and seasonal crop price fluctuations
  - These are the people with the most wealth of the freedmen in the south
  - Southerners resist it because it is taking away the cream of reconstruction south
- Soddies
  - Houses made of sod

- Very uncomfortable
- Cheap - about 30 dollars for the house (then) but still only several hundred dollars now
- People move out as soon as they can
- 2/3 of those who move to the plains fail and go back east
  - Those who do make it think of themselves as different people
- Technology
  - John Deer's steel plow
  - Barbed wire (1874 - Joseph Glidden)
    - \* 1884 - 600 miles of barbed wire in use
  - Steam thresher
  - Value of farm implements on the plains doubles
    - \* People go into debt for machines as well as land
- Government supports movement to the west
  - Agricultural colleges
- Winter wheat / Turkey red
  - Import from southern Russia
  - A different type of wheat that can be planted in late summer
  - Duram/hard wheat
  - Current mills can't handle it
  - Technology of steel rollers needs to be imported from Europe
  - George Washburn develops the first of these mills
    - \* His company becomes General Mills
  - Pillsbury made a bigger mill and his company became Pillsbury flour
- Bonanza farms
  - Huge corporate farms
  - Employing hundreds of workers to farm areas as large as Manhattan
  - Grandin farm as the most well known
    - \* Plows with a large number of plows
  - Do well for a while

- Stop when market becomes saturated as everyone does it
    - \* Most of them fail because of this
- Corn and cotton prices are dropping
  - Incentive to grow more which drops the price more
- Railroads are becoming more efficient, cost per ton-mile goes down
- The grange
  - Farmers coordinate to share plows and other farm utilities
- Wabash railroad case
  - Wabash railroad perceived as violating Illinois regulations
  - Supreme court rules that Illinois cannot regulate the Wabash railroad because it crosses state lines
- Hamlin Garland
  - American realism
- Resistance of the southwest
- Authors
  - 1884 - Helen Hunt Jackson
    - \* Writes a book - Ramona
    - \* Describes the doomed relationship between an Indian and a half-Indian
  - James Cooper
    - \* Leather-Stocking series
  - Owen Wister
    - \* The Virginian
- First American Conservation Movement
  - John Muir
- Things that are overlooked
  - Massive cooperation - everything would be impossible without cooperation
  - Ethnic diversity
- First states to give the vote to women are in the far west
  - Wyoming gives the vote in 1869
  - Many of the people who were pushing for women's suffrage were mormon