Chapter 15

The New South
Terms and People

- **cash crop** – crop such as cotton and tobacco that is grown not for its own use but to be sold for cash

- **Farmers’ Alliance** – network of farmers’ organizations that worked for political and economic reforms in the late 1800s

- **Civil Rights Act of 1875** – law that banned discrimination in public facilities and transportation
In the years following the Civil War, southern leaders hoped to build a “New South.”

They worked to modernize the economy by:

- supporting industries
- diversifying agriculture
Textile factories and lumber mills sprang up. So did iron, coal, and steel processing plants.
Railroad construction boomed.

New rail lines connected urban hubs with rural areas, cities with towns.

• Railroads moved people and products.
•Cities grew.
Yet economic expansion in the South lagged behind the rest of the country.

- War damage was extensive.
- The South lacked a well-trained labor force, and wages were low.
- A lack of capital led to a dependence on northern bankers.
Life was especially difficult for southern farmers.

Despite efforts to diversify, most farmers still depended on cash crops.

The price of cotton— their main crop— plummeted after the war.
Along with falling prices, cotton farmers faced another disaster.

**Boll weevils** wiped out entire crops.

For many farmers, it was a struggle just to survive.
Faced with serious problems, farmers joined together to form the Farmers’ Alliance.

- Worked to negotiate better prices on supplies, freight charges, and loan rates
- Connected farmers in the South and West
Black southerners made important political and economic advances in the postwar years.

Most important, they gained:

- the right to vote
- access to education
In time, however, many of the gains were reversed.

- Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan terrorized African Americans.
- Newfound freedoms were stripped away.
- Segregation was enforced.
The Civil Rights Act of 1875 banned discrimination in public facilities and transportation.

The Supreme Court, however, ruled in a series of cases decided in 1883 that such decisions were local issues.

Southern towns and cities used the ruling to further limit the rights of African Americans.
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Section 2
Terms and People

- **reservation** – specific area set aside by the federal government for the Indians’ use

- **Sand Creek Massacre** – 1864 incident in which Colorado militia killed a camp of unarmed Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians

- **Sitting Bull** – Sioux chief respected as a fighter and spiritual leader

- **Battle of the Little Big Horn** – 1876 battle in which the Sioux defeated U.S. troops led by Colonel George Custer
Terms and People (continued)

- **Chief Joseph** – leader of the Nez Percés who surrendered after trying to lead a group of Indian refugees to Canada

- **Wounded Knee** – 1890 confrontation between U.S. cavalry and the Sioux that marked the end of Indian resistance in the Ghost Dance War

- **assimilate** – to adopt the culture and civilization of the dominant group in a society

- **Dawes General Allotment Act** – 1887 law that divided reservation land into private family plots
After the Civil War, about 250,000 Indians lived in the lands west of the Mississippi.

Native Americans came from many diverse cultures.

- Had different belief systems
- Spoke different languages
- Lived in different types of houses
- Ate different foods
The diverse Indian peoples, however, shared a common view toward nature—a view that conflicted with that of many white Americans.

Native Americans saw themselves as part of nature and viewed nature as sacred.

Many white Americans viewed the land as a resource to produce wealth.
During the 1800s, the government carried out a policy of moving Indians out of the way of white settlers.

At first, Indians in the East were moved west, into the Indian Territory of the Plains. As frontier settlers continued pushing west, however, this plan changed.

Indians were forced into reservations, no longer free to roam the Plains.
Two other crises also threatened Native American civilizations.

- **Disease**: Settlers introduced diseases to which Indians had no immunity.
- **Loss of the buffalo**: Settlers slaughtered buffalo herds.
Some Native Americans fought to defend their lands.

But attacks and retaliation led to distrust—and to tragedy.

The Sand Creek Massacre saw an unarmed camp of Indians under the U.S. Army protection killed by Colorado militia.

Promises were made and peace treaties were signed, but they often were broken.
Frustration turned to violence as the government moved to crush Indian resistance.

- The **Red River War** led to the defeat of the Southern Plains Indians.
- The Sioux were victorious at the **Battle of the Little Bighorn**.
- **Chief Joseph** and the Nez Percés surrendered after attempting to retreat to Canada.
As their way of life slipped away, some Indians turned to a religious revival based on the **Ghost Dance**.

The ritual preached that white settlers would be banished and the buffalo would return.

Fearful of insurrection, government officials tried to ban the practice.
In an effort to **end the Ghost Dance**, the government attempted to arrest **Sitting Bull**.

However, he was killed in a confrontation with U.S. troops.

More than 100 Indians who fled were killed at **Wounded Knee**.

**The Indian Wars were over.**
Some **critics attacked government policies** and defended the Indians’ way of life.

**Most leaders, however, hoped that Native Americans would assimilate into American life.**
In 1887, Congress passed the **Dawes General Allotment Act** to encourage assimilation.

- Replaced the reservation system with an allotment system
- **Granted each Indian family its own plot of land**
- Specified the land could not be sold for 25 years
Section Review

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Section 3
Terms and People

- **vigilante** – self-appointed law enforcer
- **transcontinental railroad** – rail link between the eastern and western United States
- **land grant** – land given by the federal government for building railroads
- **open-range system** – system in which ranchers did not fence in their property, allowing cattle to roam and graze freely
Terms and People (continued)

- **Homestead Act** – 1862 law in which the government offered farm plots of 160 acres to anyone willing to live on the land for five years, dig a well, and build a road

- **Exodusters** – African Americans who migrated from the South to the West after the Civil War
The discovery of gold and silver created the first great boom in the West—mining.

- With each new find, prospectors rushed to the site, hoping to strike it rich.
- Others followed, bringing food and supplies.

Mining camps quickly sprang up. Many camps grew into thriving communities.
Because they had no judges or jails, miners often set their own rules for administering justice.

- In the early days, **vigilantes** took the law into their own hands.
- As towns grew, they hired **marshals and sheriffs**.

Some towns, however, disappeared as quickly as they appeared. Boomtowns turned to **ghost towns when the gold and silver ran out**.
Large companies soon took over the mining business from individual prospectors.

- Could afford the heavy equipment needed to bring mineral ores out from deep underground
- Were supported by the government with cheap land
The railroads soon began work to fulfill a longtime goal—to build a transcontinental railroad linking the East and the West.

As industries grew in the West, so did the need for railroads to transport goods and people.

The government supported this goal through:

- loans
- land grants
In 1863, the **Central Pacific** headed eastward from Sacramento. The **Union Pacific** headed westward from Omaha.

They finally met at **Promontory, Utah**, in 1869.
Work on the railroad had been difficult and dangerous. But it brought tremendous changes to the country.

- Tied the nation together
- Moved products and people
- Spurred industrial development
- Stimulated the growth of towns and cities
- Encouraged settlers to continue to move west
The railroad boom encouraged another western boom—the cattle boom.

For years, ranchers had used an **open-range system** for raising livestock.

- Property *not fenced in*
- Cattle were branded, then *grazed freely*
- *Cowboys rounded up the cattle* each spring
Cowboys then drove cattle north to the rail lines, so they could be transported to market.

The long, hard cattle drives could last for months.

They ended at railroad towns, called cow towns.
By the mid-1880s, however, the cattle boom was coming to an end.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons the open-range system ended</th>
<th>The invention of barbed wire made fencing cheap.</th>
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<td>The supply of beef exceeded demand and prices dropped.</td>
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<td>Extreme weather led to the death of herds.</td>
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Like miners and ranchers, farmers also moved west, looking for a better life.

Railroad companies encouraged pioneer settlement. So did the government. Under the 1862 Homestead Act, the government gave land to farmers willing to tend it.

Easterners, Exodusters, and immigrants soon poured onto the Great Plains.
Life on the Plains was difficult and lonely.

With little wood available, homesteaders made houses from sod.

Storms, droughts, and locusts ruined crops.
New inventions and farming methods, however, made life easier.

- Barbed wire
- Stronger plow
- Grain drill
- Windmill
- Dry-farming techniques
For many Americans, the West was a place to build new lives. But it also was a place of conflict.

**Economic rivalries**
- Cattle destroyed crops
- Sheep ruined grasses
- Mining runoff polluted water
- Control of resources disputed

**Social conflicts**
- Prejudice
- Discrimination
- Ethnic tensions
The last land rush took place in 1889, when the government opened the Oklahoma Territory to homesteaders.

“boomers” lined up to stake claims

“sooners” sneaked in early to take the best ones

The next year, the government declared there was no land left for homesteading. The frontier closed.
Section Review

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