

Bellringer: D10

What was encouraging people to come to the West? Why would they endure the dangers of the trail?

U.S. History I

Ch. 12.4 Settling California + Utah

Many people began to head West during the mid 1800s. Why?

Goals:

Investigate the reasons that many people headed West, and understand their motivations for doing so.

California Gold Rush

In 1848, people heard rumors that there was **gold** in California. The rush to California was maddening, with nearly **100,000** people arriving in California over the next two years, from 1848-49. They became known as **forty-niners**.

Many came by sea, many by land, either on the **California** or **Santa Fe** trails. About half of the **forty-niners** were Americans, but many others came too, from China, Europe, Latin America, etc.



*San Francisco just **before** the gold rush...*



As a result of the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)**, at the end of the Mexican American War, the U.S. had just recently acquired California from Mexico when the Gold Rush occurred.

Californios Out of Luck

The **Californios**, or native Hispanic Californians, were now made citizens of the U.S. by the treaty. They were guaranteed rights to their lands, but this was overturned.

The **Land Law of 1851** forced all Californios to prove that they actually owned their land claims. If a new settler wanted a Californio's land, they would go to court. Many times, the Californios could not "prove" their ownership, and so many lost their lands in this early period.

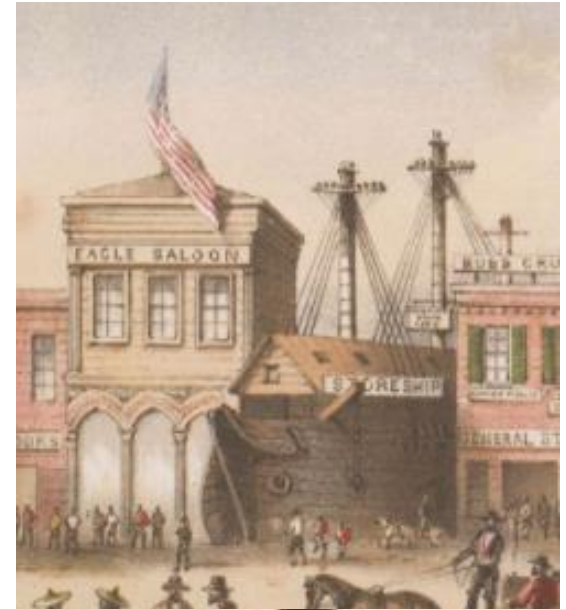


Life in Gold Rush California

California was a crazy place in this period. **Boomtowns** developed overnight. One miner recalled that one site on the Yuba River **had 2 houses the year before**. When he returned just 1 year later, he found over 1000 people, “with a large number of hotels, stores, groceries, bakeries...and gambling houses.”

Cities grew rapidly as well, with **San Francisco** booming in a few years from a small village to 20,000. The Gold Rush ended up **doubling** the world’s supply of gold, but most miners never got rich. Those who did find gold usually spent or gambled it away. Yes, life came at you fast there.

Merchants were the ones that truly got rich. Men like [Samuel Brannan](#), a clever Mormon emigrant to California, and [Levi Strauss](#), a Jewish immigrant, who invented sturdy pants from denim.



WARNING!

NOTICE IS GIVEN that any person found Pilfering, Stealing, Robbing, or committing any act of Lawless Violence will be summarily

HANGED

Vigilance Committee.

Effects of the Gold Rush:

California grew quite rapidly, and it was a **lawless** place at times. **Vigilante** groups formed, from local citizens, to make sure it didn't get out of hand. They acted as judge, jury, police, etc.

From just 20,000 people in California, to over 200,000 in 1852, the Gold Rush helped settle the West. California applied for statehood, and was approved in just 6 months in 1850. The main issue was **slavery**.

California wanted to be a “free” state, or outlaw slavery, and Southerners weren't happy about it. However, they had much less problems getting into the union than their neighbors, the Mormons in Utah.



Religious Refuge:

The **Mormons** / Latter-Day Saints were formed in 1830 by **Joseph Smith** in upstate New York. He had visions to form a new Christian Church, and so he did. He believed he had the right recipe for an ideal society.

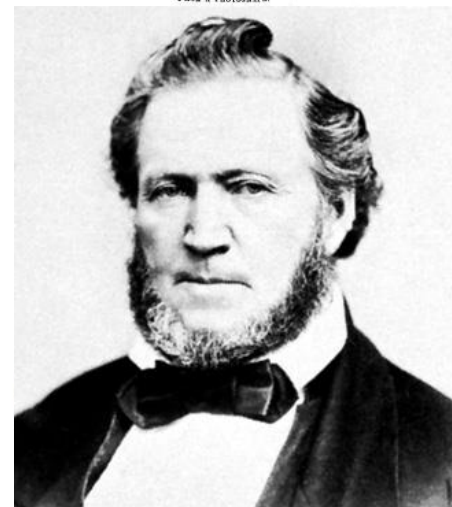
However, Smith and the Mormons were seen as very strange and even dangerous by many. This is because they **held property in common** (much like Communism), and they practiced **polygamy**, or one man having multiple wives (though they later gave this up), and had a **new book of scripture**.

“BLASPHEMY!” many cried.

Mormons were forced out of NY, and went to Ohio, then Missouri, then Illinois. Each time, they were forced to leave. In Illinois, **Joseph Smith** was **martyred**, or killed for his beliefs. **Brigham Young** took over, and decided they should move again.



A POLYGAMOUS FAMILY.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

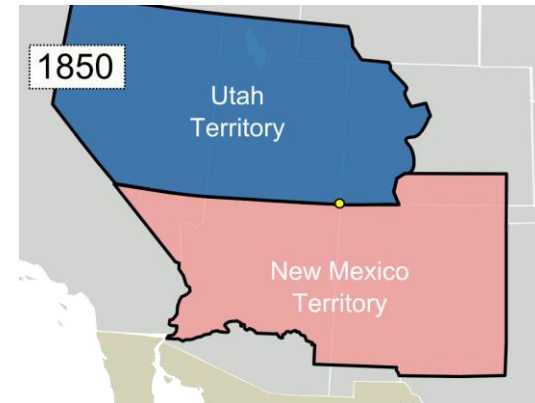


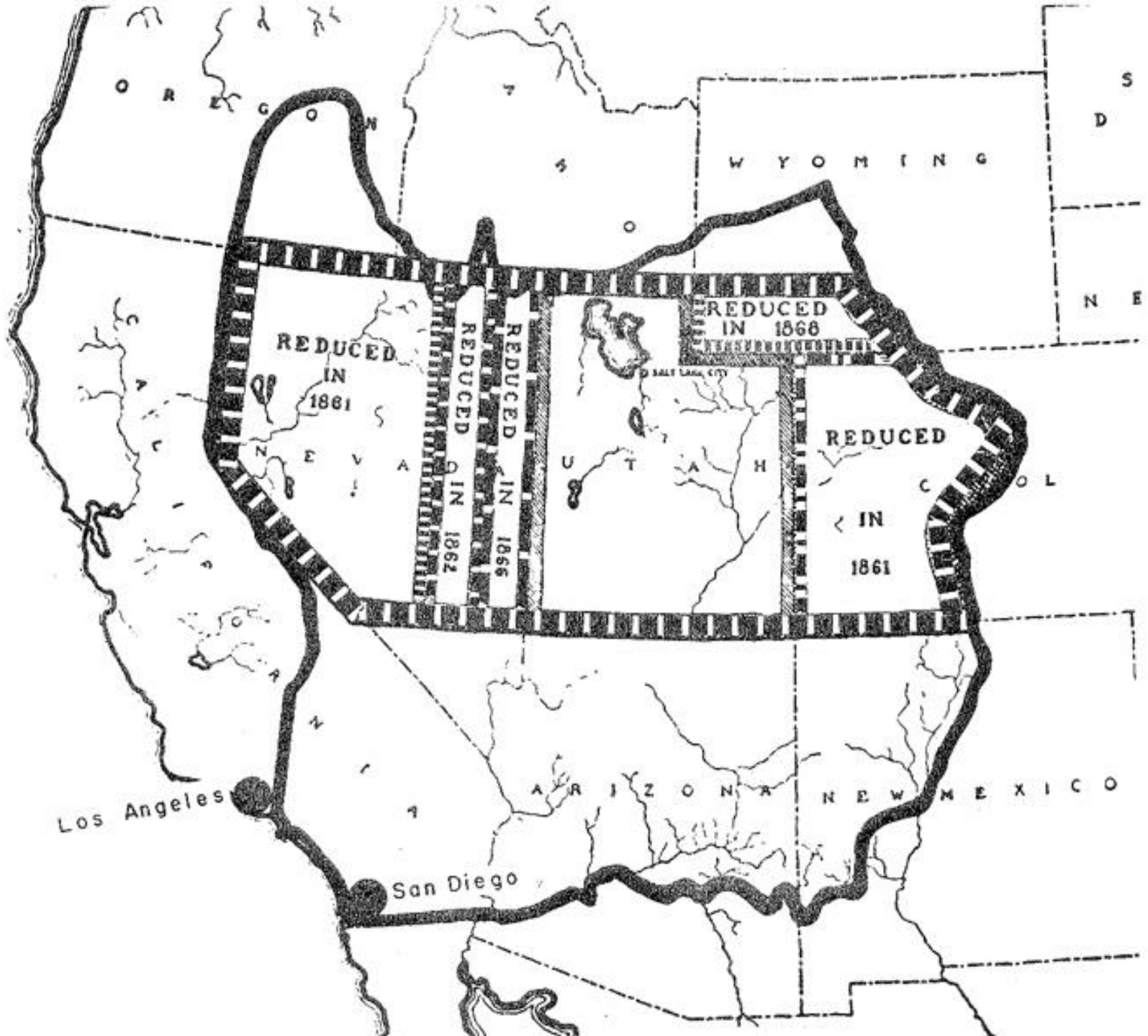
Refuge in the Desert

The Saints, under Brigham Young's leadership, left the U.S. to Mexico. They arrived in what would be Utah in 1846, nearby the **Great Salt Lake**.

Eventually 70,000 Mormons would make the Trek to Utah, and they called their new settlement area **Deseret**. They took care of themselves, and even supplied others traveling to Oregon or California. In 1848, the area became part of the U.S. **Utah** became a **territory** in 1850.

Utah would struggle to become a state, mainly due to bigotry. Americans didn't trust Mormons, and war almost broke out in 1857. Eventually Utah became a state in 1896, after polygamy was abandoned by the church.





HW: War with Mexico

You will now briefly review the textbook info on the **War with Mexico (pp. 371-74)**, and then create one of the following:

- A Political Cartoon

- An Editorial Letter

- A Propaganda Poster

Use this to try and **convince others of your point of view!**

Due: Next Time! (Along with a Quiz!)