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8.60 Analyze the reasons, outcome and legacy of groups moving west including the mountain men/trail blazers, Mormons, missionaries, settlers, and the impact of the Oregon Trail and John C. Fremont. (C,G,H)

( Pictured Above: A map of the different trails groups used as they moved westward.)

Mountain men/Trailblazers

Many of the first people to move out west were mountain men. They moved out west looking for new markets in which to sell their goods. Captain William Becknell was one of the first to blaze a trail to the west which extended from Independence, Missouri to Santa Fe, New Mexico. This trail would eventually be known as the Santa Fe Trail.

In 1808, John Jacob Astor from Germany, established a fur trading center. He sent a group of fur explorers on an expedition, using Lewis and Clark’s information from their journeys. This group discovered the South Pass which would allow later groups to get through the Rocky Mountains easier.
Many of these mountain men were fur trappers and lived a hard and dangerous life in the west. Once the fur source was exhausted, many moved back east and became wagon train leaders and led settlers to the west. James Beckwourth is known for finding a pass through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This trail would become a major route to California.

Other groups who traveled westward were missionaries. They moved out west to spread their religious beliefs. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman moved out to Oregon to work with the Cayuse Indians and influenced other families to move out to Oregon Country.

Learn about the mountain men — http://www.42explore2.com/mtnmen.htm

( Pictured Above: A map showing the Oregon Trail, Oregon Country, and northern Mexico.)
Oregon Trail - Journey West
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_E7MJu34sQk

Oregon Trail - The Story of Us
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXjsZc1my1o
The southern boundary of the United States with Mexico was not the only western territory under dispute. The OREGON TERRITORY spanned the modern states of Oregon, Idaho, and Washington, as well as the western coast of Canada up to the border of RUSSIAN ALASKA. Both Great Britain and America claimed the territory. The TREATY OF 1818 called for joint occupation of Oregon — a solution that was only temporary. Led by missionaries, American settlers began to outnumber British settlers by the late 1830s. But Britain was not Mexico. Its powerful navy was still the largest in the world. Twice before had Americans taken up arms against their former colonizers at great expense to each side. Prudence would suggest a negotiated settlement, but the spirit of manifest destiny dominated American thought. Yet another great showdown loomed.


(Pictured Above: Wagon tracks leftover from the Oregon Trail pioneers still crisscross the American midwest.)
Oregon fever swept the nation in the 1840s. Thousands of settlers, lured by the lush WILLAMETTE VALLEY headed west on the OREGON TRAIL. Families in caravans of 20 or 30 braved the elements to reach the distant land. Poor eastern families could not generally make the trip, as outfitting such an expedition was quite expensive. The CONESTOGA WAGON, oxen and supplies comprised most of the cost. The families fought Native Americans at times, but often they received guidance from the western tribes. It took six months of travel at the speed of fifteen miles per day to reach their destination.

“Friday, May 6th — Pleasant. We have just passed the Mormon graveyard. There is a great number of graves on it. The road is covered with wagons and cattle. Here we passed a train of wagons on their way back, the head man had drowned a few days before, in a river called Elkhorn, while getting some cattle across, and his wife was lying in the wagon quite sick, and children were mourning for a father gone. With sadness and pity I passed those who perhaps a few days before had been well and happy as ourselves. Came 20 miles today.”

- Excerpt from Diary of Mrs. Amelia Stewart Knight, 1853

The Mormans dealt with a lot of violence in the 1830s and finally settled in Nauvoo, Illinois. After their leader, Joseph Smith, Jr., was killed, many Mormons fled with their new leader Brigham Young to the state of Utah where they could be safe from persecution. The trail Young made was named the Mormon Trail which would be the trail Mormon wagon trains would follow for years to come.
John Charles Frémont or Fremont (January 21, 1813 – July 13, 1890) was an American military officer, explorer, and politician who became the first candidate of the anti-slavery Republican Party for the office of President of the United States. During the 1840s, when he led four expeditions into the American West, that era's penny press and admiring historians accorded Frémont the sobriquet The Pathfinder. [2]

During the Mexican American War, Frémont, a major in the U.S. Army, took control of California from the Bear Flag Republic in 1846. Frémont then served as military Governor of California; however, he was court-martialed for mutiny and insubordination. After President Polk commuted his sentence, Frémont led a fourth expedition, which cost ten lives, seeking a rail route over the mountains around the 38th parallel in the winter of 1849. He retired from military service and settled in California. Frémont acquired massive wealth during the California Gold Rush, but he was soon bogged down with lawsuits over land claims, between the dispossession of various land owners during the Mexican-American War and the explosion of Forty-Niners immigrating during the California Gold Rush. These cases were settled by the U.S. Supreme Court allowing Frémont to keep his property. Frémont became one of the first two U.S. senators elected from the new state of California in 1850. He was the first presidential candidate of the new Republican Party, carrying most of the North. He lost the 1856 presidential election to Democrat James Buchanan when Know-Nothings split the vote and Democrats warned his election would lead to civil war.

During the American Civil War, he was given command of Department of the West by President Abraham Linc
Although Frémont had successes during his brief tenure as Commander of the Western Armies, he ran his department autocratically, and made hasty decisions without consulting Washington D.C. or President Lincoln. After Frémont’s emancipation edict that freed slaves in his district, he was relieved of his command by President Lincoln for insubordination. In 1861, Frémont was the first commanding Union general who recognized an “iron will” to fight in Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant and promoted him commander at the strategic base near Cairo, Illinois. After the Civil War, Frémont’s wealth declined after investing heavily and purchasing an unsuccessful Pacific Railroad in 1866. Frémont served as Governor of Arizona appointed by President Rutherford B. Hayes and served from 1878 to 1881. Frémont, retired from politics and financially destitute, died in New York City in 1890.


Assessment - Reasons For Moving West

[http://www.wps.k12.va.us/tchrstaf/plans/westhandout.pdf](http://www.wps.k12.va.us/tchrstaf/plans/westhandout.pdf)