



Pony Express

Country Chicken Girl 2011

Reasons

- ◆ Rapid growth of the **western states**.
- ◆ **California**'s newfound prominence and its rapidly growing population.
- ◆ After **gold was discovered there in 1848**, thousands of prospectors, investors and businessmen made their way to the California Republic.
- ◆ **American Civil War** approached.

Founding

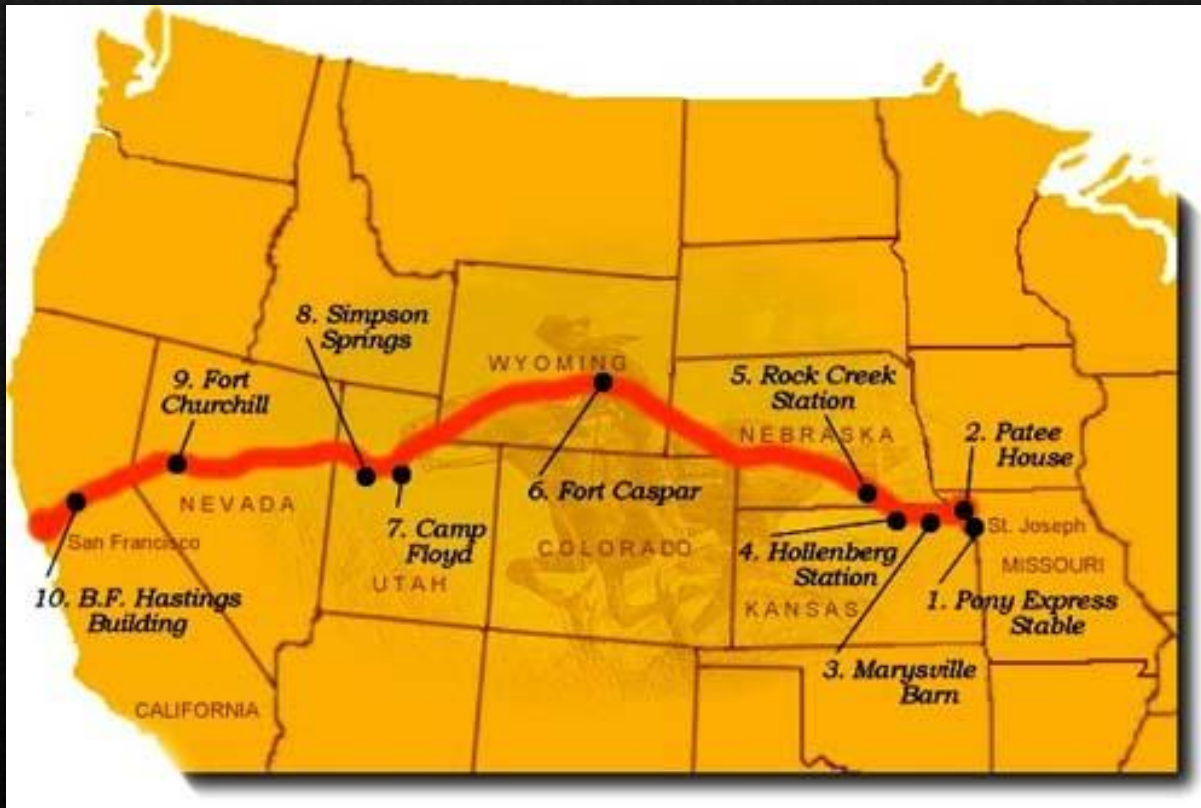
- ◆ In the **late 1850s**, William Russell, Alexander Majors, and William Waddell were the three founders of the **Pony Express** and were already in the freighting and drayage business with more than 4000 men, 3500 wagons and some 40,000 oxen.
- ◆ By utilizing a short route and using **mounted riders** rather than traditional stagecoaches, they proposed to establish a **fast mail service** between **St. Joseph, MO**, and **Sacramento, CA**, with letters delivered in **10 days**.



Operation

- ◆ In 1860, there were **~157 stations** that were **~10 miles apart** along the Pony Express route.
- ◆ At each station stop the express rider would change to a fresh horse, taking only the mail pouch called a **mochila** with him.
- ◆ The mochila could hold **20 pounds of mail** along with the 20 pounds of material carried on the horse.
- ◆ Riders could bring **one revolver and a water sack** with them.
- ◆ A total of **165 pounds** on the horse's back was allowed.
- ◆ Riders, who could not weigh over 125 pounds, changed about every 75–100 miles, and **rode day and night**.
- ◆ Riders received **\$100 a month** as pay.

Pony Express Route



- ◇ 1966 miles.
- ◇ Across The Great Plains, west of the Mississippi River and across the Rocky Mountains.
- ◇ Across 8 states.

Closing

- ◆ The Pony Express announced its closure on **October 26, 1861**, two days after the transcontinental telegraph reached Salt Lake City and connected Omaha, Nebraska and Sacramento, California.
- ◆ The company grossed \$90,000 and **lost \$200,000**.
- ◆ In **1866**, after the American Civil War was over, the Pony Express assets along with the remnants of the Butterfield Stage were sold **to Wells Fargo for \$1.5 million**.