

# **THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: BRIEF HISTORY OF MURRICA**



# “IN FOURTEEN-HUNDRED NINETY-TWO, COLUMBUS SAILED THE OCEAN BLUE...”

- The start of the European colonization of the Americas is typically dated to 1492, when a Spanish expedition headed by Christopher Columbus sailed for India to sell, buy, and trade spices & other goods.
- He went on this voyage under the protection of the Catholic Monarchs of Spain, who were searching for wealth through the establishment of colonies and trade routes.



# “IN FOURTEEN-HUNDRED NINETY-TWO, COLUMBUS SAILED THE OCEAN BLUE...”

- On this trip, they landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts, accidentally discovering what is now North America.

- Soon after this discovery came European conquest, exploration, and colonization.



# EXPLORERS & NATIVE AMERICANS

- When Columbus and his fellow explorers arrived in the New World, they were faced with pre-existing Native communities.
- As “conquerors,” the explorers believed that the Natives’ land belonged to them.
- The explorers took the land from the Native American peoples, stealing their treasures, and taking them as slaves.
- As the European explorers took the Natives’ land, they also took countless Native lives in a wide-spread genocide



NATIVES OF NORTH AMERICA  
1 Eskimo of Labrador 2 Eskimo Woman of Greenland 3 Apache 4 Navaho 5 Koshitno Woman  
6 Cheyenne 7 Nez-perce 8 Ute 9 Blackfoot 10 Woman, Mohi Chief  
11 Nez Perce 12 Wichita Woman

# EXPLORERS & NATIVE AMERICANS



- A huge percentage of Native American lives were also taken by diseases, such as small pox: never introduced to “Old World” diseases, the Natives had no immunity against them, so they had no chance to survive.

- By the time the European settlers arrived between 1600-1650, the Native population was 80% destroyed due to disease and genocide.



# EUROPEAN SETTLERS



# PIONEERS OF THE WEST

- In American folklore, the settlers that travelled to the New World are often referred to as “pioneers.”
- These pioneers sought to settle in land that was not already developed by European or American society (although the land may have been inhabited by native peoples.)
- The American pioneer is an iconic figure that is most often used in tales of the West, as the Eastern parts of America had already been discovered.
- The pioneer gave way to the figure of the cowboy, which later turned to the story of the American frontier, or more popularly, the Wild West.

# THE WILD WEST & THE GOLD RUSH

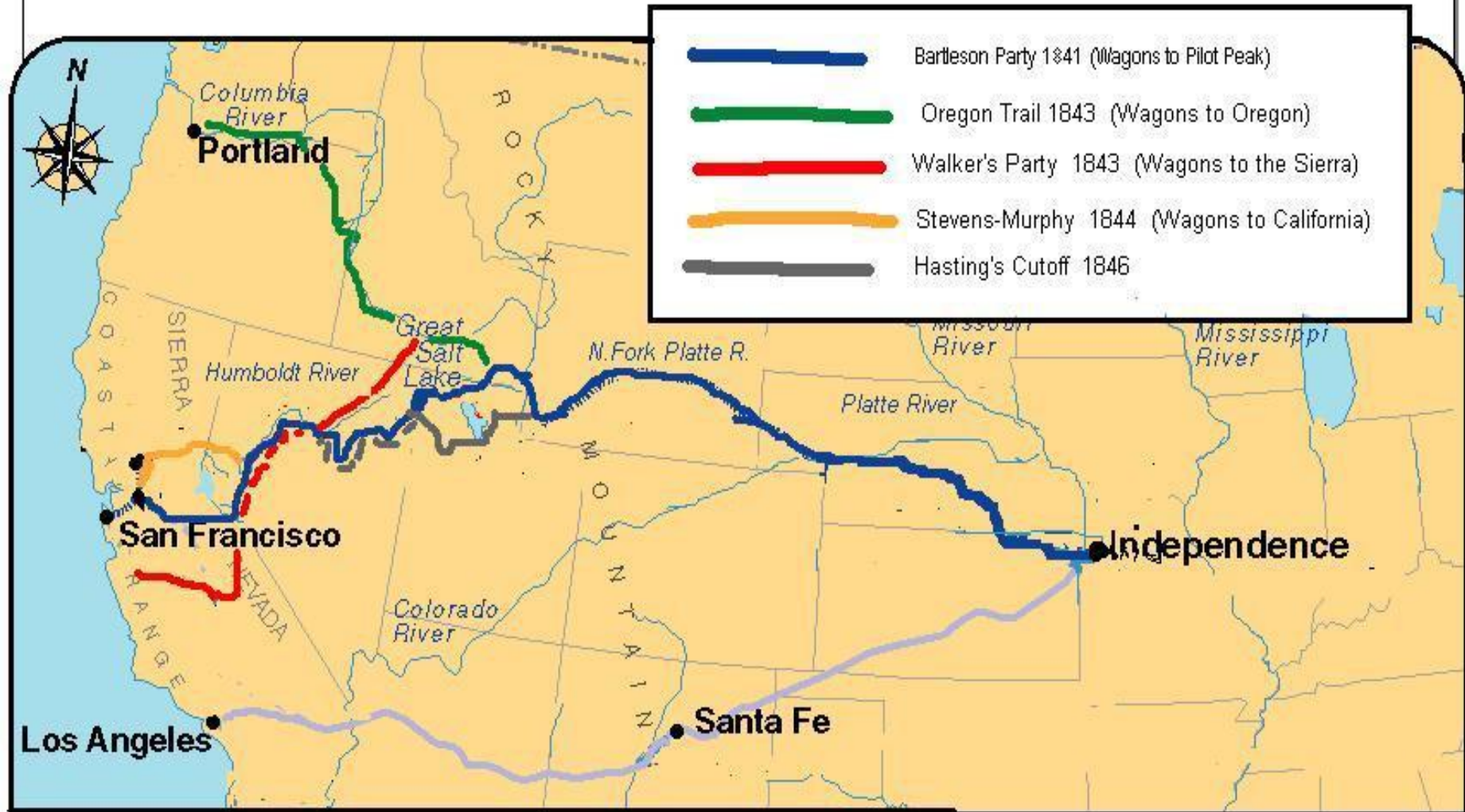


- In 1846, a war began between the US and Mexico.
- As the war came to an end around 1849, gold was discovered in the north of California, and the word spread worldwide.
- Thousands of people made their way to California in search of gold: many sailed around South America, took a short cut through Panama, or they walked the California trail.
- By 1852, the population of California was up from 10,000 to over 200,000 !



# CALIFORNIA TRAIL

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL 1841-1846



# THE WILD WEST & THE GOLD RUSH

- The rush to California brought many different types of people, including precious metal specialists, doctors, saloonkeepers, gamblers, and thousands of miners.
- During the 5 years of the California Gold Rush, over 250,000 miners found a total of more than \$200 million in gold.
- As thousands arrived, however, fewer and fewer miners struck their fortune, and most ended exhausted and broke.



# THE WILD WEST & THE GOLD RUSH



- The communities that were built during the time of the gold rush were very primitive.
- At the time, supplies were expensive and the food was poor, so the “Forty-Niners” diets consisted mostly of pork, beans, and whiskey.
- These communities were impermanent, and made up of mostly men; there was a high level of violence, drunkenness, profanity, and greed-driven behaviour.
- There were many American-Indian wars during this time, and the Forty-Niners often had to fight off “Indian” cattle thieves.

# THE FORTY-NINERS



# THE WILD WEST & THE GOLD RUSH

- There was no proper law system in place, so the members of the community often acted as vigilantes, giving harsher punishment to the “Indians” of the land.
- The types of men that lived in California during the gold rush were the basis of the “cowboy” and “pioneer of the west” figures.
- People began to mythologize the story of the West, creating stereotypes of “courageous cowboys” and “savage Indians.”

