

People to Know/Vocabulary

Lesson 24

As You Read

Who:

- *What did this person do for a living?*
- *Where are they from?*

Importance:

- *What did this person accomplish that made a difference then and/or now?*
- *How did they affect others then and/or now?*

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Chief Joseph

Chief Joseph (1840-1904) was born in present-day Oregon to the Nez Perce tribe. He became a leader of the Wallowa band in 1871. He promised his dying father to protect their ancestral land from being taken by the United States government.

As more settlers moved into Oregon, clashes between the settlers and the Nez Perce became more frequent. The U.S. government wanted to move the Nez Perce from Oregon to a reservation in Idaho. Chief Joseph refused.

When the U.S. army arrived to force the Nez Perce to move, Chief Joseph and 700 followers attempted to flee to Canada. Fighting followed. Despite being outnumbered, Chief Joseph's leadership allowed the Nez Perce to win many battles. However, Chief Joseph was forced to surrender before reaching Canada.

Chief Joseph and his followers were moved to several locations before being settled on

the Colville Reservation in present-day Washington state.

George Armstrong Custer

George Armstrong Custer (1839-1876) was born in Ohio and entered West Point Military Academy at 18. He was a terrible student, often disobeyed rules, and graduated last in his class. Nonetheless, when the Civil War began, he became an officer in the Union army and found that he loved war.

Custer became a Civil War hero. He fought at Bull Run, the Peninsula Campaign, and Gettysburg. When Robert E. Lee attempted to escape from Petersburg with his army, Custer led a cavalry raid that got him promoted. Custer received General Lee's flag of truce on April 9, 1865, and Custer witnessed Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House.

Custer was brave, aggressive, and ambitious. He loved media attention. He was constantly featured in magazine articles, and he even wrote a bestselling book, *My Life on the Plains* (1874). Yet, Custer possessed a massive ego that made him reckless and self-centered. This would have dire consequences later.

Custer had several successes against American Indians after the Civil War. In 1868, Custer defeated the Cheyenne on the Washita River bringing Custer more national fame. In 1874, Custer led a mining expedition that found gold in Sioux territory in the Black Hills of the Dakotas. The

U.S. used the gold discovery as a reason to push the Sioux off their land.

With hostilities growing, several American Indian nations joined together and left the reservations. Custer was leading the Seventh Cavalry in search of the American Indians when he unwisely divided his forces. With only about 260 men, he attacked a force of 2,500 to 4,000 warriors near the Little Bighorn River in Montana. Custer and his command were all killed within thirty minutes. This was the greatest battle victory American Indians achieved over the U.S. army.

Nat Love

Nat Love (1854-1921) was born into slavery in Tennessee. Once the Civil War ended, he headed west for opportunity and adventure. Having a natural talent for working with animals, Love found the occupation that suited him: cowboy.

In 1872, Love moved to Arizona and worked on the ranches down there and worked on the Gallinger Ranch for many years.

In Deadwood City, South Dakota, in 1876, Nat Love won a competition involving many of the skills involved in being a ranch hand (cattle worker) including roping, branding, and shooting. He walked away a the winner.

As the days of the cowboy declined, Love married and moved to southern California. In 1907, he published his autobiography, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love*. The

book sold very well; however, like many books of the time some of Love's stories seemed exaggerated and difficult to believe entirely. Yet, proving or disproving events, dates, and people cannot be verified. Nonetheless, it is an important book as it gives information about the African American experience in the Old West.

Red Cloud

Red Cloud (1822-1909) was born in Nebraska Territory. His reputation as a warrior and a natural leader allowed him to become a leader of the Oglala Lakota.

In 1865, the U.S. government began building and fortifying the Bozeman Trail that connected the gold fields of Montana to the Oregon Trail in Wyoming. Red Cloud opposed U.S. trespassing on American Indian land. For two years he led the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapho to attack workers in what became known as Red Cloud's War (1865-1867). The violence reached a peak when in December 1866, Captain William Fetterman and 80 soldiers were killed in battle a short distance from Fort Phil Kearny, Wyoming. Eventually the U.S. agreed to abandon the trail and signed the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 ending the war.

Although Red Cloud refused to fight anymore, he made many trips to Washington D.C. to speak for American Indian rights. He opposed the Dawes Act that would break up tribal lands and the selling of any American Indian land.

Sitting Bull

Sitting Bull (ca. 1834-1890) was born in present-day South

Dakota. He earned a reputation as a political leader that would not sign a treaty that gave up native land. Sitting Bull eventually became the leader of one group of Hunkpapa Lakota.

It was not until Colonel George Armstrong Custer was killed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn that Sitting Bull, a leader in the battle, became a national figure. After the battle, Sitting Bull managed to lead some of his people into Canada in the spring of 1877; however, starvation forced his return to the U.S. in 1881. He surrendered himself and was eventually sent to Standing Rock Reservation.

In the late 1880s, many Native Americans began practicing the Ghost Dance—a religious movement that predicted the uprising of American Indian dead against the whites. Although no evidence existed that Sitting Bull supported this movement, some feared he might use it to cause a riot. As a precaution, American Indian police tried to arrest Sitting Bull. Some American Indians tried to protect Sitting Bull, a fight broke out, and Sitting Bull was shot and killed by American Indian police.

Leland Stanford

Leland Stanford (1824-1893) was born in New York and became a lawyer in 1848. After a fire burned down his law practice 1852, he went to California. With his brothers, he opened a general store and made large amounts of money selling equipment to miners.

Stanford became involved in politics. He served as Republican governor of California from 1861-1863. During this time, he helped start the Central Pacific Railroad that

would build the western half of the first transcontinental railroad. Stanford and his partners made a fortune from government subsidies. Afterwards, he helped form the Southern Pacific Railroad and continued to prosper.

Unfortunately, Stanford's son died in 1884. As a tribute to his son, Stanford donated land and money for the building of Stanford University. In 1885, Stanford became a Senator representing California and served until his death in 1893.

VOCABULARY

boomtowns: towns that quickly appear, grow in size and population

During the gold rush, boomtowns appeared throughout the valley.

laborer: a person who does physical work to earn money

The laborers built the railroad tracks across the Great Plains.

nomad: people without a fixed home who wander from place to place

The nomads leave the mountains in winter to find warmer areas in the valleys.

settler: a person who moves to a new, sparsely populated place with the intention of staying there

The settler built a home in the foothills of the Sierra Mountains.

vigilante: a person who is not a member of law enforcement but punishes law breakers.