

People to Know / Vocabulary

Lessons 15, 16, & 17

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?*

Santa Anna

Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna (1794-1876) served in the Spanish military before changing sides to fight for Mexican independence. The new Mexican government was unstable. Santa Anna often switched sides depending upon who he thought would gain power. After being elected president in 1833, he quickly set up a military dictatorship.

In 1836, Santa Anna tried to end the Texas Revolution but was captured at the Battle of San Jacinto. In exchange for his life, he granted Texas its independence. Several years later he would lead the Mexican military in the fight against the United States in the Mexican-American War. Santa Anna spent the rest of his life in and out of power in Mexico. Mexico eventually tired of Santa Anna and blamed him for everything wrong with the country.

James Beckwourth

James Beckwourth (c. 1798-c. 1867) was born into slavery in Missouri but he was given his

freedom by adulthood. In 1824, he joined a trapping expedition into the Rockies. He learned the trade well and eventually worked on his own. He also developed a reputation for fighting American Indians.

By 1828, Beckwourth became friendly with the Crow nation. They adopted him into the tribe where he stayed for several years. He learned their language and married at least one woman and had several children.

Beckwourth went to Florida where he fought with the U.S. in the Seminole War. He spent the rest of his years wandering around the West. He found a path—the Beckwourth Pass—through the Sierra Mountains during the California Gold Rush years. It became a preferred route into the gold fields near Marysville. The pass is now California State Highway 70.

Annie Bidwell

Annie Bidwell (1839-1918) grew up in a wealthy, influential family. She got a first rate education and became involved in many popular causes of her time. She became involved in the temperance movement that sought to outlaw alcoholism. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, she volunteered as a nurse to help the soldiers.

She married John Bidwell in 1868 and then moved to her husband's mansion in Chico, California. She entertained many people of stature such as John Muir and Susan B. Anthony.

Her great passion was helping educate the local Mechoopda American Indian children. This led to her call for American Indian rights. She left money in her will to continue to help the local tribe and donated land to the city of Chico that is now a park.

David Crockett

David “Davy” Crockett (1786-1836) grew up in the backwoods of eastern Tennessee. In his teens he left home to go exploring and hunting along the frontier. He gained fame as a bear killer. Between 1826-1834, Crockett served in Congress first as a Democrat supporting Andrew Jackson and secondly as a Whig opposing Andrew Jackson.

Myths and tall tales about Crockett's adventures on the frontier made him one of the first national heroes in America. Many talked about Crockett running for president until he lost re-election in 1834. Disgusted and looking for a new political future, he told his constituents “you may all go to hell and I will go to Texas.” He joined the Texas Revolution and was killed defending the Alamo against the Mexican army of Santa Anna.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston (1793-1863) hated school and spent a good deal of time running from it by hiding with the local Cherokees. In his youth, he fought in the War of 1812, befriended Andrew

Jackson, became a lawyer, and entered Tennessee politics.

He moved to Texas in 1832, became involved in politics, and signed the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. He was elected commander of the Texas army and defeated Santa Anna at San Jacinto on April 21 of that year, thus gaining Texas its independence from Mexico.

Texas became an independent nation. The citizens elected Houston president of Texas twice. Houston skillfully avoided war with Mexico and established friendly relations with American Indians.

In 1845, the United States made Texas the 28th state. Houston became a U.S. Senator but his opposition to the South leaving the Union caused him to lose popularity. As governor, he rejected the vote of Texas secession and any loyalty to the Confederacy—a new Southern government created to keep slavery legal. For that, Houston was thrown out of office. Houston had enough and retired from politics.

Brigham Young

Brigham Young (1801-1877) was born in Vermont and had very little education. After reading Joseph Smith's *Book of Mormon*, Young became a believer.

Young quickly rose up the ranks of the church. After Smith's murder, Young competed for control of the Mormon church. He became president of the church and declared that Mormons could not live in American society. He moved over 15,000 Mormons to Utah to the Great Salt Lake. There Young directed the building of several towns

complete with irrigation systems, temples, schools, and theaters.

Young was an incredibly successful leader. He was a good-looking, powerfully built man that made him naturally likable but also intimidating. He called for Mormons to be as self-sufficient as possible to keep non-Mormons out of Utah. He ruled with kindness but also with a heavy hand. Any member who questioned the Mormon church was disciplined.

With the wild success of Mormons in Utah came setbacks. The nation's fear of the growing power of Mormons and Young's support of polygamy (having more than one wife) caused many Americans to fear and reject Mormonism.

In 1857, the federal government sent soldiers into Utah to take control. Young responded that he would resist. Approximately 120 settlers moving through Mountain Meadows, Utah, on their way to California were massacred by American Indians working with Mormons. According to some but disputed by others, Brigham Young personally ordered the attack.

Young led the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints until his death in 1877.