**RAILROADS TRANSCONTINENTAL & TRIUMPHANT 1865-1900**

*“There is a meaning in my part of the ceremony* (Ceremony for driving the last spike*) and I understand it. We have reached the end of our rule and a new one has come. The end of our lives, too, is near at hand…. Of our once powerful nation there are now but a few left, just a handful and we too will soon be gone. After the Indian has given way to civilization the whites will come.*” Iron Bull Chief Crow Nation

**RAILROADS The Indian Problem**

* Back East, the debate about Indians was to either civilize them or exterminate them.
* It was clear to the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa the principal obstacle to peace on the plains was the railroads bi and trisecting their hunting grounds (Buffalo central to Indian Culture)
* Railroads = Buffalo extermination =end of Indian culture=Indians stay on Reservations
* Nothing symbolized the new industrial culture like the steam locomotive: awe at its power, at the thrust of its great wheels, the clouds of smoke, the bell and whistle.
* 1865–1888 The ton miles carried from 2.16 billion to 14.48 billion 600% increase

**RAILROADS TRANSCONTINENTAL The First in 1869**

* Per Congress Union Pacific RR to go west from Council Bluffs, IA (1038 mi) and meet the Central Pacific RR starting from Sacramento, CA (742 mi) going East – to meet at Promontory Point, UT
* Leaders of RR: Dr. Thomas Durant, former ophthalmologist "Doc" Durant was nominally only a vice president of Union Pacific, Five northern California businessmen formed the [Central Pacific Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Pacific_Railroad): Theodore Judah (1828-1863) Engineer discovered Donner pass, [Leland Stanford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leland_Stanford), (1824–1893), President; [Collis Potter Huntington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collis_Potter_Huntington), (1821–1900), Vice President; [Mark Hopkins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Hopkins_(railroad)), (1813–1878), Treasurer; [Charles Crocker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Crocker), (1822–1888)
* Funding by Federal Land Grant “checkerboard” and the Union Pacific scandalous Credit Mobilier which was a illegal manipulation of contracts uncovered in 1872
* For labor the Union Pacific recruited from the many soldiers discharged by the [Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_Army) and [Confederate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate_Army) armies along with emigrant [Irishmen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Americans).
* For Labor the Central Pacific had a difficult time finding semi-skilled labor, eventually the CPRR preferred to hire Chinese, and even set up recruiting efforts in [Canton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guangdong).
* Union Pacific route After the rail line's initial climb through the Missouri River bluffs west of Omaha and out of the [Missouri River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri_River) Valley, the route bridged the [Elkhorn River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elkhorn_River) and then crossed over the new 1,500-foot [Loup River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loup_River) bridge as it followed the north side of the [Platte River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platte_River) valley west through Nebraska along the general path of the [Oregon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Trail), [Mormon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormon_Trail) and [California Trails](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Trail).
* When the CPRR got the contract Theodore Judah cabled “*We have drawn the Elephant, now let us see if we can harness him up*” - Central Pacific Route The elevation change from Sacramento (elev. 40 ft) to [Donner Summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donner_Summit) (elev. 7,000 ft) had to be accomplished in about 90 miles with an average elevation change of 76 feet per mile, and there were only a few places in the Sierra where this type of "ramp" existed.
* Central Pacific Tunnels were blasted through hard rock by drilling holes in the rock face by hand and filling them with black powder. Sometimes cracks were found which could be filled with powder and blasted loose.
* In order to keep the CPRR's Sierra grade open during the winter months, beginning in 1867, 37 miles of massive wooden [snow sheds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snow_sheds) and galleries were built between Blue Cañon and Truckee, covering cuts and other points where there was danger of avalanches.
* It was at Promontory Summit on May 10, 1869, that the two engines met. Leland Stanford drove *The Last Spike* (or [golden spike](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_spike)) that joined the rails of the transcontinental railroad. The spike is now on display at the [Cantor Arts Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cantor_Arts_Center) at [Stanford University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanford_University), while a second "Last" Golden Spike is also on display at the [California State Railroad Museum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_State_Railroad_Museum) in Sacramento.

**RAILROADS TAKE CHARGE**

* Railroad growth brought greed and Railroad Robber Barons: Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, James Hill, Henry Villard – living in luxury homes and enjoying the Gilded Age.
* Cyrus Holliday founder of Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR tapped cattle market by moving RR closer to Texas, Colorado, & New Mexico, cattle drives drove rest of distance creating the Cowboy saga.
* The Four so called Granger Lines: the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St Paul, the Chicago & Northwestern, and the Chicago, Rock island & Pacific covered hog raising and grain producing arears of the Midwest focusing on Chicago as their names showed..
* Railroads needed to bring settlers into areas along right of way, to purchase the lands the RR received from Land Grants.
* Railroads stimulate growth of steel, iron, and coal industries.
* Railroads became US major employer, 749,000 workers in 1890 – and the principal killer and maimer with numerous accidents – one of the more famous the crash and death of Illinois Central Engineer John Luther “Casey” Jones in 1900.
* Railroads create need for Pullman sleeping cars and Dining Cars which are very efficient and elegant – service provided by Black Attendants, trains offered black Americans their first substantial vocation and they formed the first black unions.
* First train robbery on October 6, 1866 on the Ohio & Mississippi RR in Jackson County , Indiana taking $13,000 – trains are viewed as banks on wheels
* The James Gang (Jesse and Frank), the Younger Gang (Coleman, Bob, Jim, and John) rob trains from West Virginia to Texas – because of unpopular Railroad Robber Barons they are viewed as Robin Hoods.
* Allan Pinkerton’s Agency and other law eventually arrest and/or kill train robbers. The first motion picture by Thomas Edison is about a train robbery.
* Railroads as a parable of Democracy and Equality: *“It is one of the ways in which the people, high and low, are being educated for the new form of society of which the world is moving. The high must stoop to help the low, all down the scale the work of God incarnating Himself to redeem mankind has to be reproduced. The result in many respects is beneficial to all classes*” Rev David Macrae

**RAILROADS TRIUMPHANT – The Railway Station as the American Gothic Cathedral**

* The Train Stations convey and evoke power and almost religious awe – of castles, of Roman Temples, Renaissance palaces and Gothic Cathedrals – A Station rose up in every town with pretensions to be taken seriously as a city, the largest and most ornate structure in the town – Money multiplied by steam raised temples to progress and power.
* The names of the railroads rang like bells, evoking geographies and landscapes – One could summarize the country in the litany of their names – the Illinois Central, the Southern Pacific, the Union Pacific, the Northern Pacific, the Burlington, and the Chesapeake & Ohio – they evolve into songs “The Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe”

**CODA** (a concluding event, remark, or section)

* *“If a single image or artifact had to be chosen to symbolize the Age of industrial Capitalism, capitalism regnant and rampant, it would surely be a steam locomotive. It was the insatiable appetite of the railroads for steel and iron and coal that was the prime stimulus to those industries. Railroads spawned towns as trout spawned fingerlings. They made the astonishing growth of cities possible by carrying food and fuel to themin their freight cars, and they made large-scale agriculture possible by transporting its products, its corn and wheat and hogs and cattle, to the cities*”. Historian Page Smith

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Smith, Page, The Rise of Industrial America 1984