

Expanding West

Section 1



MAIN IDEAS

1. During the early 1800s, Americans moved west of the Rocky Mountains to settle and trade.
2. The Mormons traveled west in search of religious freedom.

Key Terms and People

mountain men fur traders and trappers who traveled to the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Northwest in the early 1800s

John Jacob Astor owner of the American Fur Company who founded the first important settlement in Oregon Country in 1811

Oregon Trail the main route from the Mississippi River to the West Coast in the early 1800s

Santa Fe Trail the route from Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico

Mormons members of a religious group, formally known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, that moved west during the 1830s and 1840s

Brigham Young Mormon leader who chose Utah as the group's new home

Section Summary

AMERICANS MOVE WEST

In the early 1800s trappers and traders known as **mountain men** worked to supply the eastern fashion for fur hats and clothing. **John Jacob Astor**, owner of the American Fur Company, sent mountain men to the Pacific Northwest region that became known as Oregon Country. At this time Oregon Country was inhabited by Native Americans. However, it was claimed by Russia, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States.

In 1811 Astor founded Astoria, which was the first major non-Native American settlement in the region, at the mouth of the Columbia River. After a series of treaties, Oregon Country soon became jointly occupied by Great Britain and the United

What did mountain men do?

Where was the first major non-native American settlement located?

Section 1, continued

States. Many Americans began to move to the region, most of them following a challenging and dangerous route that became known as the **Oregon Trail**. It was common for families to band together and undertake the perilous six-month journey in wagon trains.

Another well-traveled route west, the **Santa Fe Trail**, was used mainly by traders. They loaded wagon trains with cloth and other manufactured goods that could be traded for horses, mules, and silver in the Mexican settlement of Santa Fe.

MORMONS TRAVEL WEST

One large group of settlers traveled west in search of religious freedom. Joseph Smith founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830 in western New York state. Although church membership grew rapidly, the converts, known as **Mormons**, were dogged by local hostility. To protect his growing community from persecution, Smith led his followers to a series of settlements in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois.

When Smith was murdered by an anti-Mormon mob in 1844, **Brigham Young** led the Mormons to a desert valley near the Great Salt Lake in what is now Utah. There the Mormons planned and built Salt Lake City and settled in the area. By December 1860 the Mormon population of Utah stood at about 40,000.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Make a list of supplies that a family of four would need to make a six-month journey by wagon train through the American West during the 1830s.

What do you think was the main language spoken in Santa Fe at this time?

Do some research on the Mormons. Trace the path that they took from New York to Salt Lake City.

Using the library or an online resource, find out how many members worldwide the Mormon Church has today.
