

Good example of railroads and settlement of west essay

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The history of western settlement in the United States is linked closely with the history of railroad construction. Immigrants were integral in the construction of the American transcontinental railroads, which facilitated the expansion to the west, and they used the railroad to migrate and settle in the west. This paper will discuss the importance of railroads in the settlement of the west in the 19th century and onwards.

With the completion of the transcontinental railroad after the Civil War opened the west for economic development and settlement. White settlers started to pour across the Mississippi to ranch, mine and farm from the East. African-Americans also started to come to the West from Deep South with promise of all-black Western towns and prosperity. The Chinese railroad workers added to the diverse population of the region.

Settlers coming from the East started to transform the Great Plains. Huge herds of bison that used to roam the plains were wiped out, and farmers started to plough natural grasses for planting wheat and other necessary crops. The cattle industry also started to gain importance as the railroad provided the practical means for the cattle to reach the market. By the 1880s, American Indians were confined to their reservations that were in areas of the West, which seemed least desirable for the white settlers.

Railroad companies started heavily promoting the lands, which ran along the tracks, to encourage Americans to build towns, because these communities would have provided train's freight cars with the required consumers and businesses. Railroad land departments started functioning like public relations offices by providing free tickets to the newspapermen in exchange for fewer upbeat stories about these territories, sending their

representatives to Europe for attracting immigrants and handing handbills describing the available land's fertility. Railroads started offering special credit terms and passenger rates to Americans who started settling on the railroad lands.

After the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, immigrants started entering the United States at immigration checkpoints at the Eastern Seaboard of Ellis Island and used the train system to start migrating to the west. In fact, railroad companies promoted such plans themselves, because with the increase in population in the west would have resulted in more business for the railroads. Railroads, used to be the means through which western state's population increased dramatically with the creation of immigrant settlements and further westward migration of the Native Americans.

References

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