

# The Gilded Age

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The Transcontinental Railroad



# The Pacific Railway Act

- Provided construction of a transcontinental railroad by two corporations
- Encouraged rapid construction, the Government offered each company land along its path
- A competition developed as each raced to obtain as much land as possible!



# The Union Pacific



- Led by Grenville Dodge
- Started westward from Omaha, Nebraska in 1865
- Laid 1,086 miles of rails
- Workers included: Civil War vets, Irish immigrants, miners, farmers, cooks, adventurers, and ex-convicts – at the height of the project they employed 10,000 workers
- Faced blizzards in the mountains, blistering heat in the summer and angry Natives



# The Central Pacific

- Directed by Theodore Judah
- Started on the west coast heading east
- Hired about 10,000 Chinese workers and paid them \$1.00 a day
- All equipment was shipped from the Eastern United States
- Laid 688 miles









# Additional Facts

- Took 4 years to complete
- May 10, 1869 – Promontory Summit, Utah – where the two companies met and drove in the last spike! Huge celebration!
- Benefits: Increased other industries such as steel, iron, and coal
- West bursts in population (formally 100 days turned into 6-8 days of travel time)
- The Beginning of the Industrial period