

Encyclopedia



AMERICAN WEST

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Editors

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During the mid-1880s, JOHN TAYLOR supervised the establishment of a second Mormon sanctuary beyond the boundaries of the United States. The Mormon leader directed Charles Ora Card to lead a group of Saints north into Alberta, Canada. The resulting settlements grew and flourished. By the 1890s, the Mormons had established settlements throughout the region, the most important being Cardston, named for its Mormon founder.

Mormon settlements outside of Utah during the course of the late nineteenth century covered the length and breadth of the American Far West and beyond. Although they enjoyed a record of mixed success, the settlements that endured—particularly those in southeastern Idaho, northern Arizona, eastern Nevada, western Wyoming, and southern Alberta—attracted significant numbers of Mormon settlers and continued to grow. The Mormons who lived in the Far West settlements exerted significant influence in the economic, political, and social affairs of their various regions—and continue to do so today.

—Newell G. Bringham

SEE ALSO: Deseret, State of

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MORMON TRAIL

Mormons moving from NAUVOO, ILLINOIS, to the Salt Lake Basin in present-day Utah used a 1,297-mile-long trail, known as the Mormon Trail. The trail ran across southern Iowa and generally followed primitive territorial roads and Indian traces to present-day Council Bluffs. From there, the trail continued across Nebraska north of the Platte River (on a trail previously blazed



"Mormon emigrants," in a caravan of covered wagons, 1879. Photograph by C. W. Carter. Courtesy National Archives.

by trappers and Oregonian missionaries) through present-day Grand Island and Scottsbluff into Wyoming, along the Platte to Fort Laramie. At the fort, the Mormon Trail crossed the Platte and followed the OREGON TRAIL for 397 miles, partly along the Sweetwater River, to the Continental Divide at South Pass. After turning southwest to FORT BRIDGER, the Mormons left the Oregon Trail and picked up the California-bound Reed-Donner Party trace (Hastings Cutoff) through the Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains into the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

The Mormon Trail was used from February 1846, when the Mormons left Nauvoo, through the immigrant season of 1868; thereafter, Mormons were able to ride the Union Pacific Railroad to Utah.

Up to seventy thousand Mormons used the trail. Contrary to popular belief, the Mormons did not blaze the trail; instead they wove together earlier trails and traces. The trail bears their name because of the improvements they made and because they used it so extensively for twenty-two years. Parts of the trail were subsequently used by other travelers and businesses: gold rushers; Pony Express riders; the transcontinental telegraph; stage, freight, and mail lines; the U.S. Army; and the Union Pacific Railroad.

—Stanley B. Kimball

SEE ALSO: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Handcart Companies; Mormons

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MORNING STAR (NORTHERN CHEYENNE)

Morning Star, or Dull Knife (1808?–1883) as Euro-Americans later called him, was an Ohmeseheso who emerged during the mid-nineteenth century as a great Northern Cheyenne Old Man Chief and Sweet Medicine Chief. During his younger years, Morning Star distinguished himself for bravery in battle and for his even greater diplomacy.

During a clash between the U.S. Army and the Northern Cheyennes at the Upper Platte River bridge, Morning Star sought peace and reconciliation rather than conflict. His quest for peace between his people and Euro-Americans reflected his political obligations and role in Cheyenne society. In 1854, the Cheyenne Council of Forty-Four renewed itself and selected him as an Old Man Chief for the Ohmeseheso or Northern Eaters band.

During the 1860s and 1870s, despite the continual loss of Northern Cheyenne lands and resources, Morning Star advocated peaceful relations with the U.S. military, governmental officials, and immigrants. His advocacy of peace and coexistence with Euro-Americans would cost the Northern Cheyenne leader, when in 1866, Dakota soldiers whipped him. When he negotiated with military officials on the construction of new forts on Northern Cheyenne lands and in the Dakota Territory, many angry Northern Cheyennes threatened him for his actions. Although losing some political prestige, he realized that conflict was inevitable and necessary for the Northern Cheyennes to survive.

In an effort to quell the growing Cheyenne and Dakota resistance, the U.S. military launched a series of military campaigns in 1876. On several occasions, U.S. military forces attacked Morning Star's camps. One of the most devastating attacks came in 1876 at the hands of United States troops commanded by Colonel RANALD SLIDELL MACKENZIE. The army troops destroyed Morning Star's village, leaving his people destitute. After his 1876 winter camp on Rosebud Creek was captured and his starving people were relentlessly harassed by U.S. military forces following GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER's annihilation, Morning

Star and his people surrendered in 1877 at the Red Cloud Agency in Nebraska. On May 28, 1877, 937 Northern Cheyennes, including Morning Star's band, were removed to the Darlington Agency in the Indian Territory. During their stay, Morning Star repeatedly pleaded with Agent John D. Miles that malarial fever, the distribution of rations, and Southern Cheyenne hostility made conditions impossible for his people. On September 9, 1878, Morning Star and other Northern Cheyenne leaders led 353 Northern Cheyennes north to their homeland. Captain L. B. Johnson's troops discovered Morning Star's band, who had crossed the Platte River, and escorted them to Fort Robinson. The fort's commander locked Morning Star's people in a guarded barracks to force their return to the Indian Territory. They were denied food, water, and fire for warmth. On January 9, 1879, Morning Star and his people escaped from their prison. U.S. troops searched for them for twelve days and murdered 61 Northern Cheyennes, most of whom the soldiers buried in mass graves. (Some of the remains of Northern Cheyennes, however, found their way into Eastern scientific museums.) The survivors temporarily resided at the Pine Ridge Agency but eventually transferred to Fort Keogh, where they worked as scouts. In 1883, the seventy-five year old Morning Star died, one year before the Northern Cheyennes received their reservation in southeastern Montana. Morning Star's tenacity of purpose to create a homeland for all Northern Cheyennes was realized on October 16, 1993. That day, the remains of 24 murdered Northern Cheyennes were brought home.

—Gregory R. Campbell

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MORRILL ACT OF 1862

Named for its creator and chief sponsor, Representative Justin S. Morrill (1810–1898), a Vermont Republican, the Morrill Act is officially known as the Land Grant Act of 1862. Morrill's object was to provide grants of land to state colleges whose "leading object [would be to teach subjects] related to agriculture and the mechanic arts," yet without excluding general sciences and classical studies. The act had a profound effect on American higher education. State universi-