

LAWLWSSNESS IN MINERS TOWNS

- 1840s communities were small. Crime wasn't a huge problem as communities could police themselves.
- But the white population of California was 8,000 in 1846; by 1855 it was 300,000 and multicultural.
- Huge tent cities arose with little law enforcement which led to claim jumping (stealing others claims), salting a claim (selling false claims) and road agents robbing those who struck gold. Young men with little money led to gambling, fighting, drinking and prostitution made worse by guns and all claims being worked out by mid 1850 which led to miners working for less money for companies.
- A famine in China led to 20,000 Chinese trying to mine and they faced extreme violence and a crime wave in 1851. This led to a vigilante committee of 200 to restore order but lead to gang violence.
- Vigilantes and miners courts of locals, which dealt out rough justice replace more legal methods.
- This was worsened by the fact that Territories didn't have their own law enforcement agencies. The government only sent 3 Judges to each Territory and one Marshall who would elect Deputy Marshalls.
- Sheriffs would help out after a Territory had more than 5,000 men by they were untrained and poorly paid. The Pinkerton Detective Agency formed in 1850 were sometimes used to deal with problems like the Reno Gang.

END OF THE WILD WEST

- Railways, telegraph, more States and the growth of settlements led to better local trained lawmen .

LAWLESSNESS IN COW TOWNS

- Lawlessness grew with the railroads such as in railroad towns, called Hell on Wheels, but the worst of these were Cow Towns. Abilene in Kansas had a population growing from 500 to 7,000 in 1867. By 1870 most people there were desperate. Cowboys were regularly having gunfights, there were murders and cowboy 'celebrations' had attracted saloons and brothels, gamblers, swindlers, prostitutes and outlaws.
- A jail was built in 1870 but was immediately pulled down and a sign saying no guns was shot to pieces. Tommie Smith, a local bareknuckle boxer tried to restore order in 1870 but was shot and hacked to death with an axe. Wild Bill Hickok replaced him in 1871 but was sacked for gambling all the time.
- Ex-soldiers from the Civil War had formed gangs like the Confederate deserters that formed the Reno Gang who netted \$100,000 dollars from train robberies between 1866 and 1868 but were caught and hung by the Pinkerton Detective Agency. Despite this murder was rare but theft was common.

PROBLEMS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

- This problem of law and order, requiring the use of outside agencies, and the problem of widespread theft was made worse by a variety of issues like conflict over resources between small and open ranchers and homesteaders.
- Also racist attacks on Chinese and African Americans,
- The huge geography of the American West with some counties covering 200,000 km2,
- widespread poverty and the corruption of the Cattle barons that would act outside the law and use fear and intimidation with the support of politicians, weak untrained, corrupt and poorly paid lawmen and independent attitudes that encouraged men to settle their difference with guns.
- A good example of this was the poor Billy the Kid from New Mexico, who began stealing butter, horses and cattle when he was 14. He fought in the Lincoln County War in 1878 between Chisum, a big rancher and Murphy another rancher who had the support of homesteaders. He tracked down an killed the people who killed one of his friends in the war, hid around Mexico with no real law enforcers capable of finding him or keeping him in jail (he escaped 3 times), until Pat Garrett shot him in 1881.
- The problem of finding good lawmen can also be seen with Wyatt Earp, a former fighter and cattle rustler who became Deputy Marshall in the Cowtown of Wichita and then Marshall of the Cowtown of Dodge and in 1879 he moved to Tombstone in Arizona. He became Deputy Sheriff in Tombstone in 1880 to restore order in the fight against the ranchers and cowboys, the McClaurys and the Clantons. In 1881, Wyatt and his brothers Morgan and Virgil were accused of stagecoach robbery and killed Billy Clanton and Tom and Frank McClaury at the OK Corral. In short, the only way to restore order seemed to be to ban guns in town limits, which reduced crime in Wichita, Dodge. Abilene and Ellsworth and cowboys were often banned.

LAW AND ORDER

JOHNSON COUNTY WAR AND REDUCTION OF HOSTILITY

- The Cattle Barons suffered after the Great Die Up, losing land and power to homesteaders and small ranchers. This lead to the range wars, one being the Johnson County War in 1892.
- The cattlemen of the Wyoming Stock Growers' Association, banned small ranchers from spring round-ups. Local small ranchers and homesteaders were tired being bullied so juries made up of ordinary people would almost never convict someone accused of rustling by the big ranchers so they took power in their own hands. An Open Rancher called Bothwell, killed two homesteaders, Ella Watson and Jim Averill in 1889, and 3 small ranches died in fighting. As a result of all this, the homesteaders and small ranchers established their own association in 1892. The WSGA lost patience and began to plan for a full-scale invasion of Johnson County in order to kill 70 men who 'should die for the good of the country'.
- They raised \$100,000, hired 22 Texan gunmen, and paid them \$5 a day plus expenses, with a bonus of \$50 for every rustler they killed. Despite being well-armed and supplied, the 'invaders' failed in their mission. Learning that two men from their hit list, Nate Champion and Nick Ray, were at the KC Ranch, they abandoned their original plan and attacked the ranch instead. They were held up all day until the people of buffalo, th Sheriff and a 40 strong posse attacked and they fled to the TA Ranch where they were rescued by the Army.
- Thus Open Ranching came to an end more land was sold and there were fewer tensions once farms and ranches fenced off their land. Although the WSGA survived by using Their Chicago lawyers to move the trial which shows they were protected it also showed that people were now willing to stand up against the cattle barons.