

Exploration Opens the West

Between 1790 and 1820, the United States doubled its size and added ten new states.

- ★ The larger country offered new opportunities to the white settlers who replaced the Indians.
- ★ During the first half of the 1800s, Americans blazed new trails, gathered information, and scouted the West for places to settle.
- ★ By 1850, Americans had settled nearly all the land east of the Mississippi River and along the western coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Few settlers had moved farther west onto the vast, treeless Great Plains.



A In 1820 Captain Stephen Long described the western plains as the "Great American Desert." Few settlers disturbed the people and wildlife of the plains for years afterward.

