Westward Expansion. At the dawn of the 19th century, the size of the United States doubles with the Louisiana Purchase. The Appalachians are no longer the barrier to American migration west; the Mississippi River becomes the country's central artery; and Jefferson's vision of an Empire of Liberty begins to take shape. American historian Stephen Ambrose joins Professors Maier and Miller in examining the consequences of the Louisiana Purchase -- for the North, the South, and the history of the country. View Transcript.

Brinkley: The whole history of the United States is that constant movement westward, that constant march from the Europeans to either progress, or to de-civilizing the civilizations that were already here. But, I think, movement. Scharff: But that's the land again. This book, "Westward Expansion," is a collaborative work between three American History classes from Spirit Lake, Iowa. We have reached the period of westward expansion after looking at the Civil War and then reconstruction. Reconstruction was literally "reconstructing" the United States after the Civil War ravaged physical, economic, and political aspects of the Confederacy. Westward Expansion. Westward expansion, the 19th-century movement of settlers into the American West, began with the Louisiana Purchase and was fueled by the Gold Rush, the Oregon Trail and a belief in "manifest destiny." Oregon Trail. California Gold Rush. Lewis and Clark Expedition. Buffalo Soldiers. Davy Crockett. Daniel Boone.