



Chapter Twenty

Commonwealth and Empire, 1870–1900



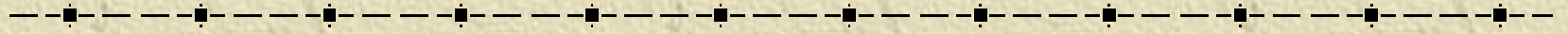
Part One:



Introduction



Commonwealth and Empire



✦ What does this painting suggest about American expansion?

Chapter Focus Questions

- ✦ What characterized the growth of federal and state governments and the consolidation of the modern two-party system?
- ✦ How did mass protest movements develop?
- ✦ What was the economic and political crisis of the 1890s?
- ✦ How did the United States develop as a world power?
- ✦ What were the causes and outcomes of the Spanish-American War?



Part Two:

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American Communities

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The Cooperative Commonwealth

- ✦ Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* described a utopian society in which the economy was under the collective ownership of the people.
 - ◆ People enjoyed short workdays, long vacations, and retired at age 45.
- ✦ The Point Loma community was established near San Diego in 1897.
 - ◆ It was a communal society that provided both private and shared housing.
 - ◆ No one earned wages.
 - ◆ The men sought self-sufficiency through agriculture while the women made clothing to be worn.
 - ◆ The members of the community shared two meals a day and spent leisure time together.
 - ◆ Donations from admirers and wealthy members allowed the community to last for decades.



Part Three:

**Toward a National
Governing Class**

The Growth of Government

- ✦ The size and scope of government at all levels grew rapidly during the gilded age.
- ✦ New employees, agencies, and responsibilities changed the character of government.
- ✦ Taxes increased as local governments assumed responsibility for providing such vital services as police, fire protection, water, schools, and parks.

The Machinery of Politics

- ✦ The federal government developed its departmental bureaucracy.
- ✦ Power resided in Congress and the state legislatures.
- ✦ The two political parties only gradually adapted to the demands of the new era.
 - ◆ Political campaigns featured mass spectacles that reflected the strong competition for votes.
 - ◆ Political machines financed their campaigns through kickbacks and bribes and ensured support by providing services for working-class neighborhoods.
- ✦ Offices were filled by the spoils system that rewarded friends of the winning party.

The Spoils System and Civil Service Reform

- ✦ In 1885, Congress passed the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act that created the civil service system and a professional bureaucracy.
 - ◆ A system of standards was developed for certain federal jobs.
 - ◆ This effort paralleled similar efforts at professionalism in other fields.
- ✦ The legislative branch was also given a more active role in government under the Circuit Court of Appeals Act of 1891.



Part Four:

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**Farmers and Workers
Organize Their Communities**

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The Grange

- ✦ Farmers and workers built movements that challenged the existing system.
- ✦ The Grange formed in the 1870s by farmers in the Great Plains and South who suffered boom and bust conditions and natural disasters.
- ✦ Grangers blamed hard times on a band of “thieves in the night,” especially railroads, and pushed through laws regulating shipping rates and other farm costs.
- ✦ Grangers created their own grain elevators and set up retail stores for farm machinery.
 - ◆ The depression of the late 1870s wiped out most of these programs.

The Farmers' Alliance

- ✦ In the late 1880s, Texas farmers, led by Charles W. Macune, formed the National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union, in cooperation with the Colored Alliance. The Alliance sought to:
 - ◆ challenge the disproportionate power of the governing class
 - ◆ restore democracy
 - ◆ establish a cooperative economic program
- ✦ Northern Plains farmer organizations soon joined the Alliance.
- ✦ Midwestern farm groups battled railroad influence.
- ✦ By 1890, the Alliance was a major power in several states demanding a series of economic reforms.

Workers Search for Power

- ✦ In 1877, a “Great Uprising” shut down railroads all across the country.
 - ◆ Federal troops were called out, precipitating violence.
 - ◆ Government created national guards to prevent similar occurrences.
- ✦ Workers organized stronger unions that increasingly resorted to strikes and created labor parties.
- ✦ Henry George ran for mayor of New York on the United Labor Party ticket and finished a respectable second.
- ✦ In the late 1880s, labor parties won seats on numerous city councils and in state legislatures in industrial areas where workers outnumbered other classes.
- ✦ Map: Strikes by State 1880

Women Build Alliances

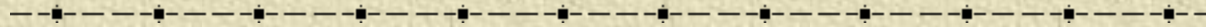
- ✦ Women actively shaped labor and agrarian protest.
- ✦ The Knights included women at their national convention and even ran day-care centers and baking cooperatives.
- ✦ Women were active members in the Grange and Alliances.
- ✦ The greatest female leader was Frances E. Willard, who:
 - ◆ was president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union
 - ◆ mobilized nearly 1 million women to promote reform and to work for women's suffrage

Populism and the People's Party

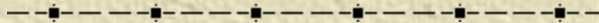
- ✦ Between 1890 and 1892, the Farmers' Alliance, the Knights of Labor, the National Colored Farmers' Alliance and other organizations formed the People's Party.
- ✦ The People's Party platform called for:
 - ◆ government ownership of railroads, banks, and the telegraph
 - ◆ the eight-hour day
 - ◆ the graduated income tax, and other reforms
- ✦ Though the party lost the 1892 presidential race, Populists elected three governors, ten congressional representatives, and five senators.



Part Five:



The Crisis of the 1890s



The Depression of 1893

- ✦ In 1893, the collapse of the nation's major rail lines precipitated a major depression.
- ✦ Full recovery was not achieved until the early 1900s.
 - ◆ Unemployment soared and many suffered great hardships.
 - ◆ Tens of thousands took to the road in search of work or food.
- ✦ Jacob Coxey called for a march on Washington to demand relief through public works programs.
 - ◆ “Coxey’s Army” was greeted warmly by most communities on the way to Washington.
 - ◆ The attorney general, who was a former lawyer for a railroad company, conspired to stop the march.
 - ◆ Police clubbed and arrested the marchers for trespassing on the grass in Washington.

Strikes: Coeur d'Alene, Homestead, and Pullman

- ✦ Strikes were sparked by wage cuts, longer work days, and big business attempts to destroy unions.
- ✦ In Idaho, a violence-plagued strike was broken by federal and state troops.
 - ◆ The miners formed the Western Federation of Miners.
- ✦ The hard times precipitated a bloody confrontation at Andrew Carnegie's Homestead steel plant.
- ✦ A major strike in Pullman, Illinois:
 - ◆ spread throughout the nation's railroad system
 - ◆ ended with the arrest of Eugene Debs
 - ◆ resulted in bitter confrontations between federal troops and workers in Chicago and other cities.

The Social Gospel

- ✦ A “social gospel” movement led by ministers such as Washington Gladden, called for churches to fight against social injustice.
- ✦ Charles M. Sheldon urged readers to rethink their actions by asking: “What would Jesus do?”
- ✦ The Catholic Church endorsed the right of workers to form trade unions.
- ✦ Immigrant Catholic groups urged priests to ally with the labor movement.
- ✦ Women’s religious groups such as the YWCA (Young Women’s Christian Association) strove to provide services for poor women.

The Free Silver Issue

- ✦ Grover Cleveland won the 1892 election by capturing the traditional Democratic Solid South and German voters alienated by Republican nativist appeals.
- ✦ When the economy collapsed in 1893, government figures concentrated on longstanding currency issues to provide a solution.
- ✦ The debate was over hard money backed by gold or soft money backed by silver.
 - ◆ Cleveland favored a return to the gold standard, losing much popular support.

Populism's Last Campaign

- ✦ The hard times strengthened the Populists, who were silver advocates.
- ✦ They recorded strong gains in 1894.
- ✦ But in 1896, when the Democrats nominated William Jennings Bryan as a champion of free silver, Populists decided to run a fusion ticket of Bryan and Tom Watson.
- ✦ Republicans ran William McKinley as a safe alternative to Bryan.
 - ◆ Republicans characterized Bryan as a dangerous man who would cost voters their jobs.

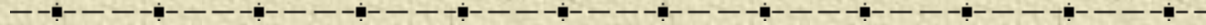
The Election of 1896

✦ Map: Election of 1896

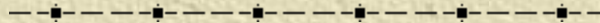
- ✦ Bryan won 46% of the vote but failed to carry the Midwest, Far West, and Upper South.
 - ◆ Traditional Democratic groups like Catholics were uncomfortable with Bryan and voted Republican.
- ✦ The Populists disappeared and the Democrats became a minority party.
- ✦ McKinley promoted a mixture of pro-business and expansionist foreign policies.
- ✦ The return to prosperity after 1898 insured continued Republican control.



Part Six:



The Age of Segregation



Nativism and Jim Crow

- ✦ Chart: African American Representation in Congress
- ✦ Neither McKinley nor Bryan addressed the increased racism and nativism throughout the nation.
- ✦ Nativists blamed foreign workers for hard times and considered them unfit for democracy.
- ✦ The decline of the Populist party led to the establishment of white supremacy as the political force in the South.
 - ✦ Southern whites enacted a system of legal segregation and disenfranchised blacks, approved by the Supreme Court.
- ✦ Reformers abandoned their traditional support for black rights and accepted segregation and disenfranchisement.

Mob Violence and Lynching

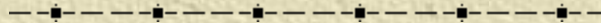
- ✦ Racial violence escalated.
- ✦ Between 1882 and 1900 lynchings usually exceeded a hundred each year.
 - ◆ They were announced in newspapers and became public spectacles.
 - ◆ Railroads offered special excursion prices to people traveling to attend lynchings.
 - ◆ Postcards were often printed as souvenirs.
- ✦ Ida B. Wells launched a one-woman anti-lynching crusade.
 - ◆ She argued that lynching was a brutal device to get rid of African Americans who were becoming too powerful or prosperous.



Part Seven:



**“Imperialism of
Righteousness”**



The White Man's Burden

- ✦ Many Americans proposed that the economic crisis required new markets for American production.
- ✦ Others suggested Americans needed new frontiers to maintain their democracy.
- ✦ The Chicago World's Fair:
 - ◆ showed how American products might be marketed throughout the world
 - ◆ reinforced a sense of stark contrast between civilized Anglo-Saxons and savage people of color.
- ✦ A growing number of writers urged America to take up the "White Man's Burden."
- ✦ Clergymen like Josiah Strong urged Americans to help Christianize and civilize the world.

Foreign Missions

- ✦ After the Civil War, missionary activity increased throughout the non-western world.
 - ◆ College campuses blazed with missionary excitement.
 - ◆ The YMCA and YWCA embarked on a worldwide crusade to reach non-Christians.
- ✦ Missionaries helped generate public interest in foreign lands and laid the groundwork for economic expansion.

An Overseas Empire

✦ Map: “An American Domain”

- ✦ Beginning in the late 1860s, the United States began expanding overseas.
- ✦ Secretary of State William Henry Seward launched the nation’s Pacific empire by buying Alaska and expanding the United States presence in Hawaii.
- ✦ The U.S. policy emphasized economic control, particularly in Latin America.
- ✦ During the 1880s and 1890s, the United States strengthened its navy and began playing an increased role throughout the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific.

Hawaii

- ✦ The United States annexed Hawaii in 1898.
- ✦ Hawaii was a stepping-stone to Asian markets.
- ✦ In 1899, Secretary of State John Hay proclaimed the Open Door policy in Asia to ensure American access and laid the basis for twentieth-century foreign policy.



Part Eight:

**The Spanish-American
War**

The United States and Cuba

- ✦ A movement to gain independence from Spain began in the 1860s.
- ✦ Americans sympathized with Cuban revolutionaries.
 - ◆ The Spanish were imposing harsh taxes.
 - ◆ By 1895, public interest in Cuban affairs grew, spurred on by grisly horror stories of Spanish treatment of revolutionaries.
- ✦ McKinley had held off intervention, but public clamor grew following an explosion on the USS *Maine*.
- ✦ Humphrey and George Wallace.

A “Splendid Little War” in Cuba

✧ Map: The Spanish-American War

- ✧ The United States smashed Spanish power in what John Hay called “a splendid little war.”
- ✧ The Platt Amendment protected U. S. interests and acknowledged its unilateral right to intervene in Cuban affairs.
 - ✧ This amendment paved the way for U.S. domination of Cuba’s sugar industry and provoked anti-American sentiments among Cuban nationals.
- ✧ The United States also annexed a number of other Caribbean and Pacific islands including the Philippines.

War in the Philippines

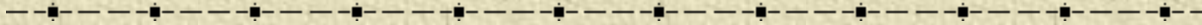
- ✦ Initially, Filipino rebels welcomed American troops in their fight against Spain.
- ✦ After the United States intended to annex their country, they turned against their former allies.
- ✦ Between 1899 and 1902, Americans fought a war that led to the death of one in every five Filipinos.
 - ◆ Supporters defended the war as bringing civilization to the Filipinos.
 - ◆ Critics saw the abandonment of traditional support for self-determination and warned against bringing in dark-skinned people.

Critics of Empire

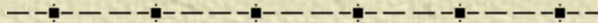
- ✦ The Filipino war stimulated the founding of an Anti-Imperialist League that denounced the war and territorial annexation in no uncertain terms.
- ✦ Critics cited democratic and racist reasons for anti-imperialism.
- ✦ Most Americans put aside their doubts and welcomed the new era of aggressive nationalism.



Part Nine:



Conclusion



Commonwealth and Empire



✦ Media: Chronology