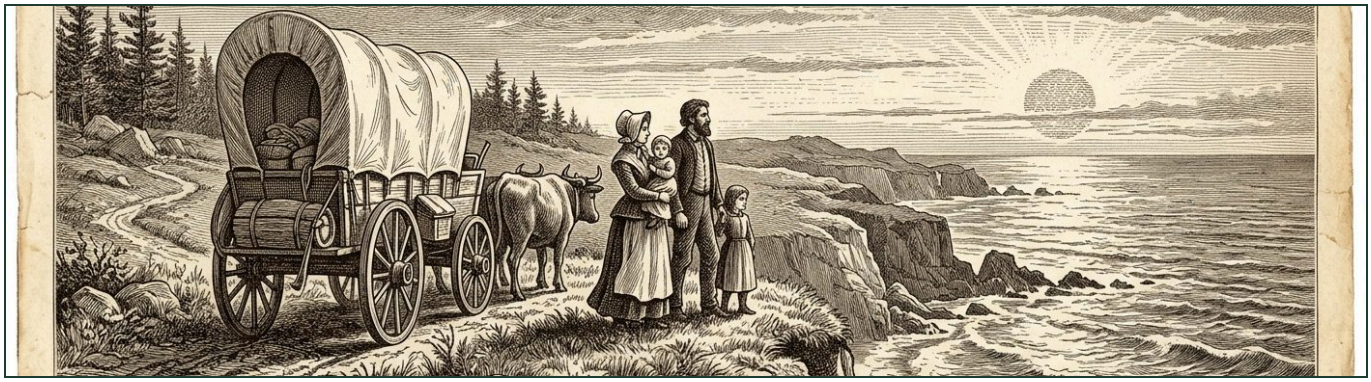


1803 – 1853

Manifest Destiny Timeline

Manifest Destiny was the 19th-century American belief that the United States was destined to expand across the entire North American continent, shaping half a century of territorial growth through diplomacy, war, and settlement.

1803 — Louisiana Purchase

The United States buys the Louisiana Territory from France, doubling the size of the country and giving the US control of the Mississippi River.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Louisiana Purchase opened a vast western territory and set in motion the process of continental expansion — but also raised the question of whether slavery would spread into the new lands.*

1819 — Adams-Onis Treaty

Spain cedes Florida to the United States and agrees on the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase territory.

> **Why it mattered:** *The US now controlled the entire eastern seaboard — and gained a clearer western claim that pointed toward the Pacific.*

1836 — Republic of Texas

American settlers in Mexican Texas rebel against Mexican rule and win independence, establishing the Republic of Texas.

> **Why it mattered:** *Texas independence created a new nation on the US border that wanted to join the Union — though its admission would intensify the crisis over the expansion of slavery.*

1845 — Manifest Destiny Coined

Journalist John L. O'Sullivan writes of "our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."

> **Why it mattered:** *O'Sullivan gave a name to what millions of Americans already believed — that God or fate had destined them to spread democracy across the continent, whatever stood in the way.*

Manifest Destiny Timeline *continued*

1845 — **Texas Annexed**

The United States annexes the Republic of Texas as its 28th state despite Mexico's insistence that Texas still belongs to Mexico.

> **Why it mattered:** *Texas annexation brought the US into direct conflict with Mexico over the southern border — a conflict that quickly escalated into war.*

1846 — **Oregon Treaty**

The United States and Britain settle their long-running dispute over the Oregon Territory, fixing the border with Canada at the 49th parallel.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Oregon Treaty gave the US the Pacific Northwest — including the future states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho — through diplomacy rather than war.*

1846–48 — **Mexican-American War**

The US goes to war with Mexico; American forces capture Mexico City and seize California, New Mexico and other territories in a decisive victory.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Mexican-American War added over 500,000 square miles to the United States — the entire American Southwest — but intensified the crisis over slavery by creating new territories where its fate was uncertain.*

1848 — **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**

Mexico cedes California, Nevada, Utah, most of Arizona, and parts of New Mexico and other states to the US in exchange for $15 million, ending the war.

> **Why it mattered:** *The US had reached the Pacific — from sea to shining sea — but the question of slavery in the new territories would tear the country apart within a decade.*

1848 — **California Gold Rush**

Gold is discovered at Sutter's Mill; about 300,000 people from around the world come to California by about 1855.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Gold Rush transformed California from a sparsely populated territory into a state within two years, demanding immediate political decisions about how the new territories would be governed.*

1853 — **Gadsden Purchase**

The United States buys a strip of land from Mexico along the southern border in present-day Arizona and New Mexico.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Gadsden Purchase completed the continental United States in its current form — the land area of the lower 48 states was now fixed, and Manifest Destiny had been achieved.*