

# First Across the Continent: The Epic Transcontinental Railroad

## A Monumental Undertaking

The First Transcontinental Railroad was a monumental undertaking that connected the eastern and western United States for the first time. The project was completed in 1869, after six years of construction by two separate teams of workers: the Central Pacific Railroad, which built eastward from Sacramento, California, and the Union Pacific Railroad, which built westward from Omaha, Nebraska. The two railroads met at Promontory Summit, Utah, on May 10, 1869, with the driving of the Golden Spike.



## First Across the Continent: Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition by Noah Brooks

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1493 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 258 pages



The transcontinental railroad was a major turning point in American history. It opened up the American West to settlement and development, and it made possible the transportation of goods and people across the continent in a matter of days, rather than months or years.

## **The Central Pacific Railroad**

The Central Pacific Railroad was formed in 1861 by a group of businessmen led by Leland Stanford, Collis Huntington, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker, known as the "Big Four." The railroad was backed by the federal government, which provided loans and land grants to help finance its construction.

The Central Pacific Railroad began construction in Sacramento, California, in 1863. The railroad faced many challenges during its construction, including difficult terrain, extreme weather conditions, and labor shortages. However, the railroad's workers persevered, and they completed the line to Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869.

## **The Union Pacific Railroad**

The Union Pacific Railroad was formed in 1862 by a group of businessmen led by Grenville Dodge. The railroad was also backed by the federal government, which provided loans and land grants to help finance its construction.

The Union Pacific Railroad began construction in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1865. The railroad faced many of the same challenges as the Central Pacific Railroad, including difficult terrain, extreme weather conditions, and labor shortages. However, the railroad's workers persevered, and they completed the line to Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869.

## **The Golden Spike**

On May 10, 1869, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad met at Promontory Summit, Utah. The two railroads were connected with the driving of the Golden Spike, a ceremonial last spike

made of gold. The driving of the Golden Spike marked the completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad.

The Golden Spike is now on display at the Stanford University Museum of Art in California. It is a symbol of the monumental achievement of the First Transcontinental Railroad.

## **The Legacy of the First Transcontinental Railroad**

The First Transcontinental Railroad had a profound impact on the United States. It opened up the American West to settlement and development, and it made possible the transportation of goods and people across the continent in a matter of days, rather than months or years.

The transcontinental railroad also played a major role in the economic development of the United States. It helped to create a national market for goods and services, and it stimulated the growth of industries such as agriculture, mining, and manufacturing.

The First Transcontinental Railroad is a testament to the ingenuity and determination of the American people. It is a symbol of the nation's ability to overcome challenges and achieve great things.



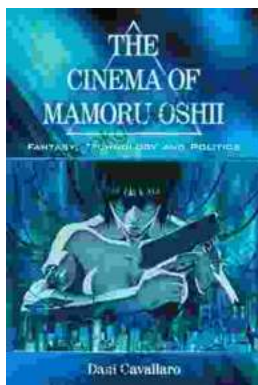
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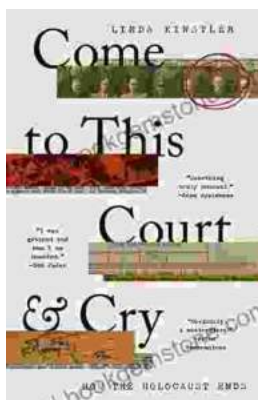
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