



Investigation 2: Closing the Bozeman Trail

Building the Trail

When

1863

Why

John Jacobs and John M. Bozeman attempted to make a shorter, more direct route between the Oregon Trail and the gold mines of Montana.

Where

The trail ran through Wyoming and Montana.

Trouble on the Trail

Why the first wagon train was warned

The trail cut through the Lakota buffalo hunting country.

Why the Fort Laramie meeting was held

The US government attempted to negotiate a peace treaty with the area tribes in an attempt to stop Indian harassment of travelers on the trail.

Why the Fetterman attack occurred

During the peace conference, Colonel Carrington and 700 men arrived with orders to build three new forts along the Bozeman Trail. Chief Red Cloud was livid. Tensions escalated when Captain William Judd Fetterman rode to Ft. Phil Kerney after it was attacked by the Lakota.

Why the Bozeman Trail forts were abandoned

General U.S. Grant ordered the forts closed to avoid more fighting.

Who “closed” the Bozeman Trail

Lakota Chief Red Cloud’s war against immigrant infringement on the tribe’s negotiated lands (the Great Sioux Reservation, which was created in the Ft. Laramie Treaty in 1866) put an end to the use of the Trail after just five years.

