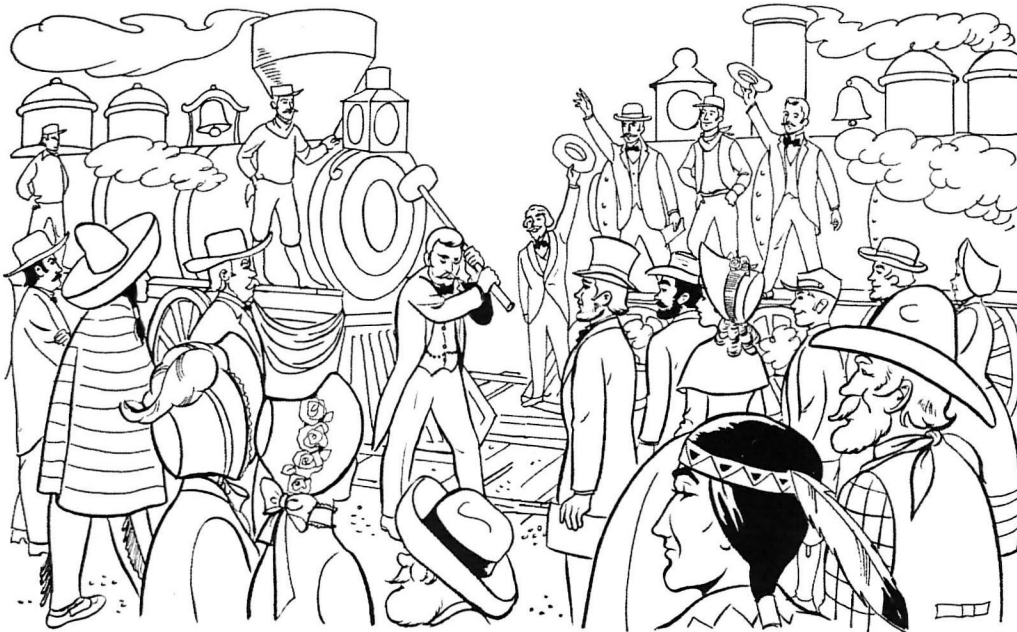
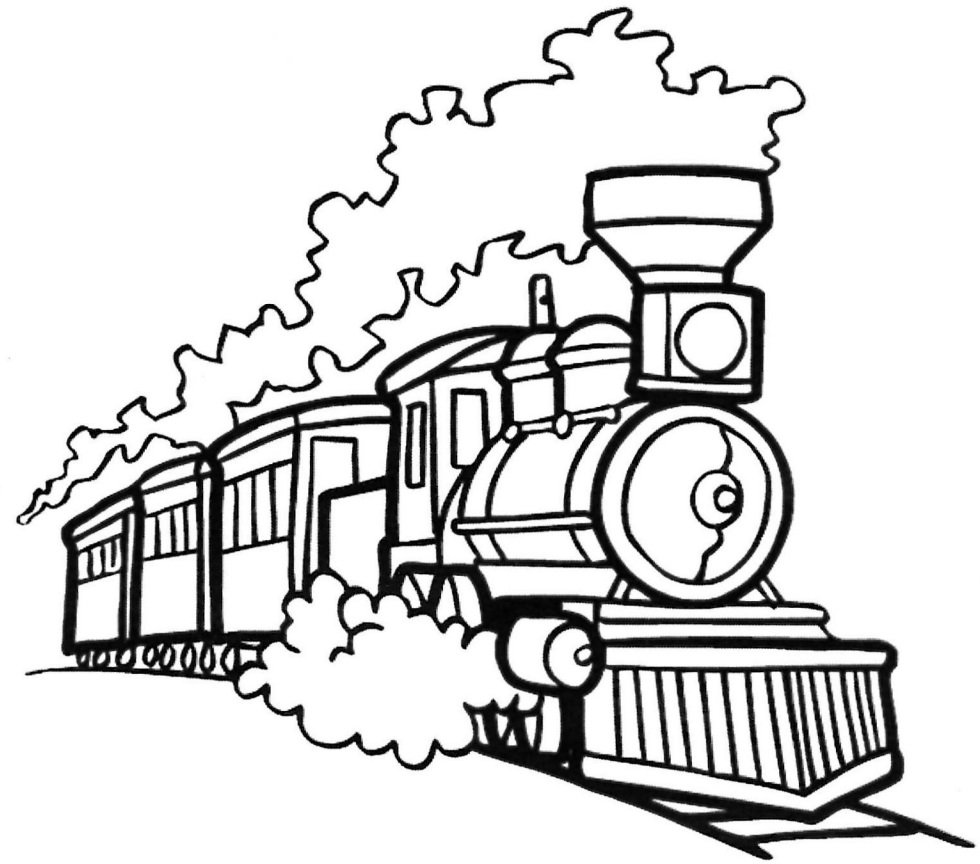


The Transcontinental Railroad: Now the "United" States!

In the mid-1800s, the only way to get from the East Coast to the West Coast was to travel by wagon train or stage coach. The only way that mail or messages could be sent was by sending them with someone travelling or by the Pony Express. The people on either side of the country were not truly "connected". With the building of the transcontinental railroad and telegraph system, people were able to travel from east to west in only nine days and messages could be transmitted very quickly by the telegraph. Goods could be shipped quickly too; the building materials needed in the west could be sent by rail, and the produce from the west could be shipped back east.. With the completion of the transcontinental railroad, the United States was finally truly united.



On May 10, 1869 the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads merged at Promontory Point in the mountains of Utah.



The Golden Spike

The two railroads finally met at Promontory Summit, Utah on May 10, 1869. Leland Stanford, governor of California and president of the Central Pacific Railroad, drove in the last spike. This final spike was called the "Golden Spike" or "The Final Spike". You can see it today at Stanford University in California.



GOLDEN SPIKE TOWER