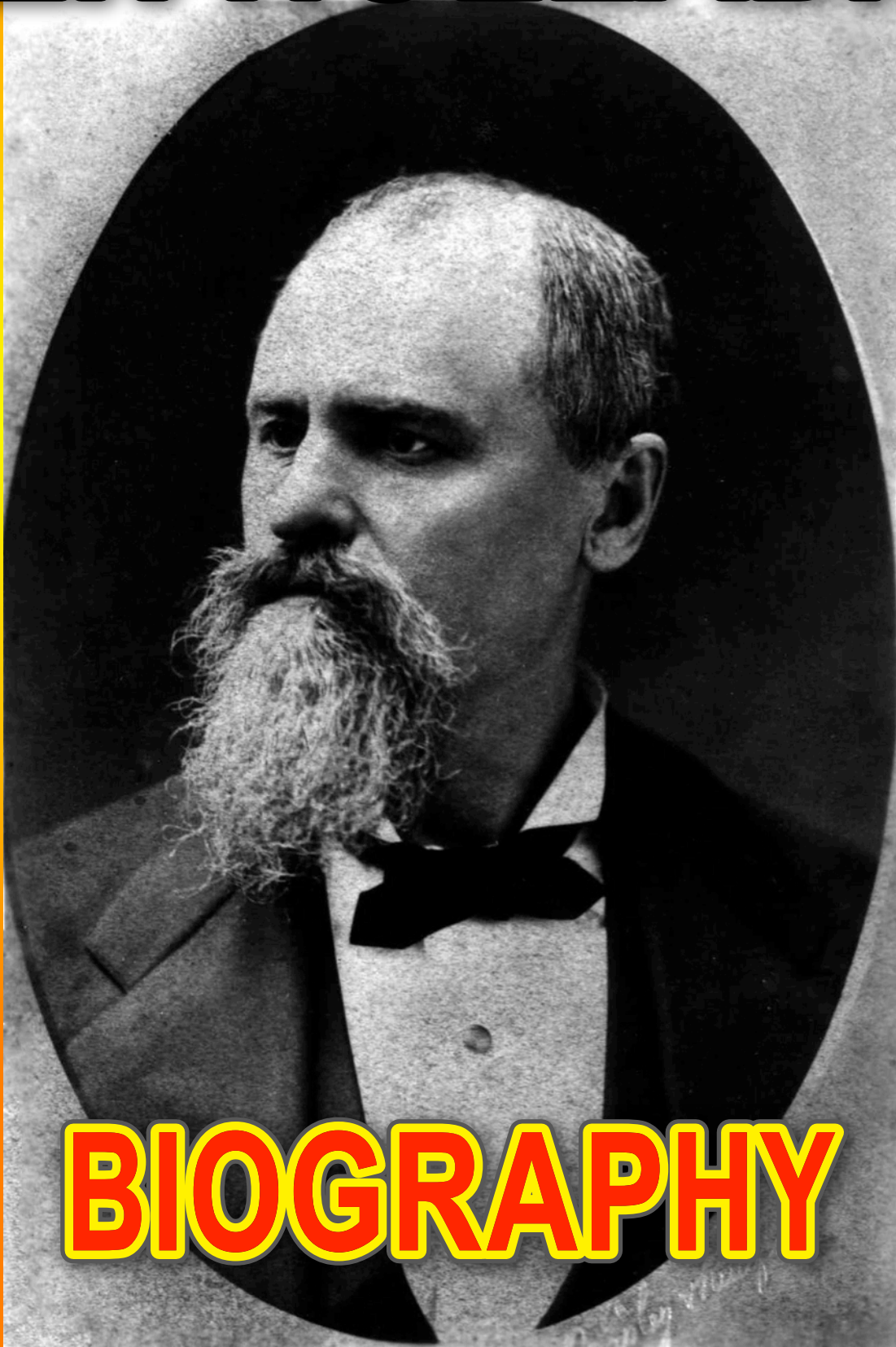


BEN HOLLADAY



BIOGRAPHY

BEN HOLLADAY

Known as the 'Stagecoach King', Ben Holladay was born on October 14, 1819 in Kentucky. His father had been a guide for wagons traveling through the Cumberland Gap in Kentucky. Holladay started as a businessman in Missouri, where he supplied General Stephen Watts Kearney during the Mexican-American War.

After that, Holladay focused on making money through transportation ventures. During the 1849 California Gold Rush, he built and ran the Overland Stage to California.

In the mid-1860s, Holladay took over the Pony Express, and set up a mail service to Salt Lake City, Utah. The old Oregon Trail and Pony Express routes had become difficult because Native Americans sometimes attacked people along them. But Holladay's new route made it safer to travel and carry goods.

But before long, railroads were threatening to take over stagecoaches as the most important and profitable form of transport. And so Holladay moved to Oregon to start in the railroad business, where the money lay. There was a competition to build a railroad alongside the Willamette River – whoever laid the first twenty miles of track would win the contract to build the rest. Holladay worked on the east side of the River, and won the competition.

Holladay took over and expanded the railroad lines on both sides of the river until 1873. That year there was a financial crisis, and Holladay lost much of his money. He lost control of the railroads in 1876, and he died eleven years later.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'businessman'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'businessman' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'businessman'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'businessman'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'businessman' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: build	construct

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Then Holladay took over the Pony Express, and worked on other overland routes.

After that, Holladay lost control of the railroads.

During the 1849 California Gold Rush, Holladay built the Overland Stage to California.

Holladay expanded the railroad network until the financial crisis of 1873.

When railroads looked set to be more profitable than stagecoaches, Holladay entered the railroad business in Oregon.

It was in Missouri that Holladay started on his business ventures.

Ben Holladay was born in Kentucky in 1819.

Get to the facts

1 What was Ben Holladay known as?

2 When did Holladay build the Overland Stage to California?

3 What did Holladay take over in the mid-1860s?

4 Where did Holladay start in the railroad business?

5 When was there a financial crisis?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Mail service to Salt Lake City

Imagine you are in Salt Lake City in the 1860s to declare the new mail service open...(now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'businessman'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'businessman' means.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – build Synonym – construct

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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After that, Holladay lost control of the railroads.

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