across the country and the Pony Express riders would then carry the message the rest of the way. It was difficult work, for the riders had to be tough and lightweight. One famous advertisement reportedly read, “Wanted: Young, skinny, wiry fellows not over eighteen. Must be expert riders, willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred.”

The Pony Express only ran for 18 months from 1860 to 1861 when the Pacific Telegraph Company from the east met up with the Overland Telegraph Company from the west in Salt Lake City. The Pony Express had held the country together.

Now the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads built the first transcontinental railroad, coming together in Promontory, Utah in 1869.

From Sea to Shining Sea
Arrow of Light Ceremony

In the patriotic song,"America" we speak of our country being from "sea to shining sea". But it wasn't always that way. At the turn of the century at 1800 our country went form the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River.

In the early 1800's the United States were offered the French holdings to the west. President Thomas Jefferson authorized what was to become known as the Louisiana Purchase for the sum of 15 million dollars, or about three cents per acre.

Congress authorized an expedition call the Corp of Discovery to explore, map and document the newly acquired region. President Jefferson chose Meriwether Lewis to lead the expedition and Lewis chose his friend William Clark to be the co-leader. From 1804 to1806 Captains Lewis and Clark led a company of 33 men from St. Louis up the Mississippi and then up the Missouri Rivers, across the Rocky Mountains and the Great Divide and down to the mouth oft the Columbia River. The expedition was both military and scientific in nature as the country now did stretch from sea to sea.

With the conclusion of the Mexican War the United States extended clear through to California, but with the Civil War looming the government needed to make sure the west did not follow the South into rebellion. To keep California loyal to the Union a communications link was created between Washington, D.C. and Sacramento where messages could be exchanged in just 10 days, and that was accomplished by the use of the telegraph and the newly organized Pony Express. The telegraph would carry the message half way