

Cattle and The Cowboys

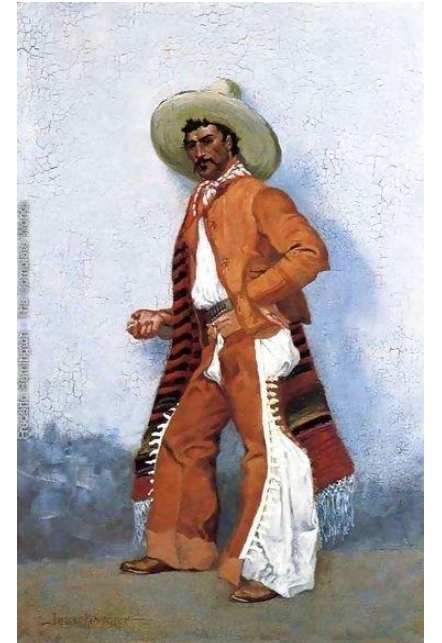
Texas Longhorn

- Could stand heat well
- Could travel many miles without water
- Able to forage for food on their own
- Only drawback: nervousness



Mexican Background

- flourishing cattle industry in Mexico;
- Americans learned about ranching from the Mexican vaqueros;
- English has adopted Mexican words: corral, bronco, loco, sombrero,
- ranch from rancho; rodeo from rodear, stampede from estampida



Texans Faced a Problem

How to get all that beef to the industrial workers and European immigrants in Northern cities?

Shipping yards in Kansas: Abilene, Dodge City, Wichita(cow towns)

Chisholm Trail

*Missouri Pacific Railroad; with the arrival of the railroads, ranchers made fortunes;

loaded onto cattle cars and shipped to Chicago or the East

By 1871, more than 600,000 head of cattle making **the Long Drive**.

Open Range

millions of miles of publicly owned grasslands; open range

unfenced

cattle **fed here free of charge;**

uncontrolled breeding;

each Spring a mass round up of

cattle; custom of branding



Cowboys

- Typical herd one to three thousand cattle;
- Trail crew 8-18 cowboys
- Worked from sunrise to sunset
- Ten to twenty miles a day

Dangers:

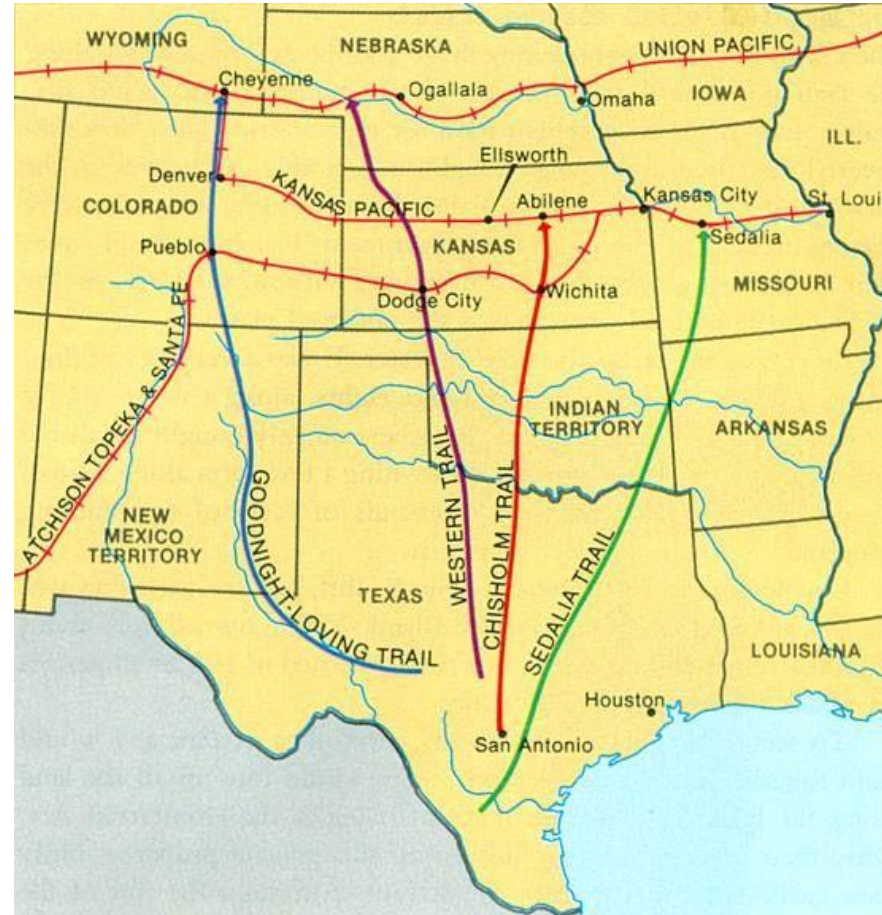
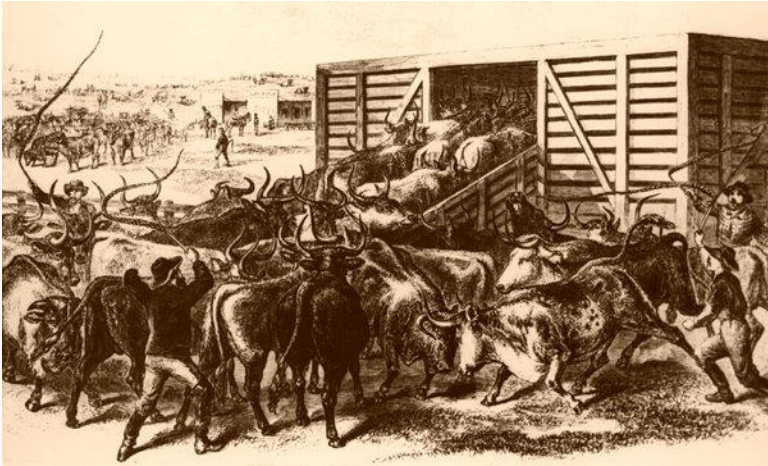
- stampedes
- thunder and lightening
- rivers
- Drought
- Rustlers

Destination: Kansas, Nebraska or Wyoming to be fattened; cow towns on the railways like Abilene, Kansas City, Dodge City, Topeka

steers fattened for quick for slaughter or shipped to huge Stockyards on Kansas City, Milwaukee, or Chicago;

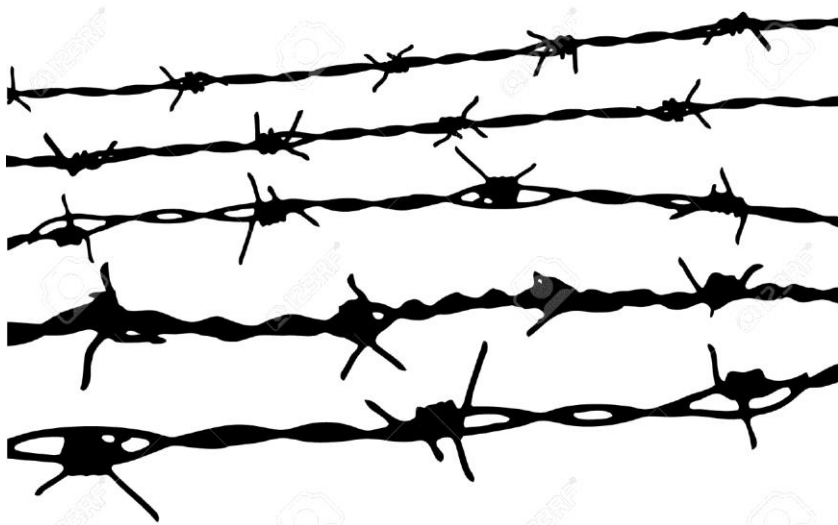


Cow Towns



Barbed Wire

- Farmers liked barbed wire because kept cattle out (conflict between ranchers and farmers)
- As the open range diminished and became less and less available for cattle grazing, barbed wire fencing became an affordable way for ranchers to enclose their property; now you can control breeding;



Cattle Kingdom Ends

The high profits were ended by barbed wire; farmers were now able to keep cattle off their crops; more and more land fenced in;

Eventually, ranchers also benefited from barbed wire; with less open range, they needed to fence in large areas to keep in their herds; they could also control breeding to produce a better quality herd; by 1888, 8 million acres enclosed for intensive breeding;

In the end, with overgrazing and increased efficiency, prices fall; less profit for ranchers;