

## Cattle and Cotton

### Lesson 1: The Cattle Kingdom

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*Why do people trade?*

#### Terms to Know

**ranchero** the Spanish word for *rancher*

**drive** the movement of cattle in large herds to a stockyard or market

**open range** public land that could be used by anyone, usually for grazing cattle

**drover** a person who moves livestock overland to market

**stockyard** a place where livestock are penned before they are slaughtered or shipped elsewhere

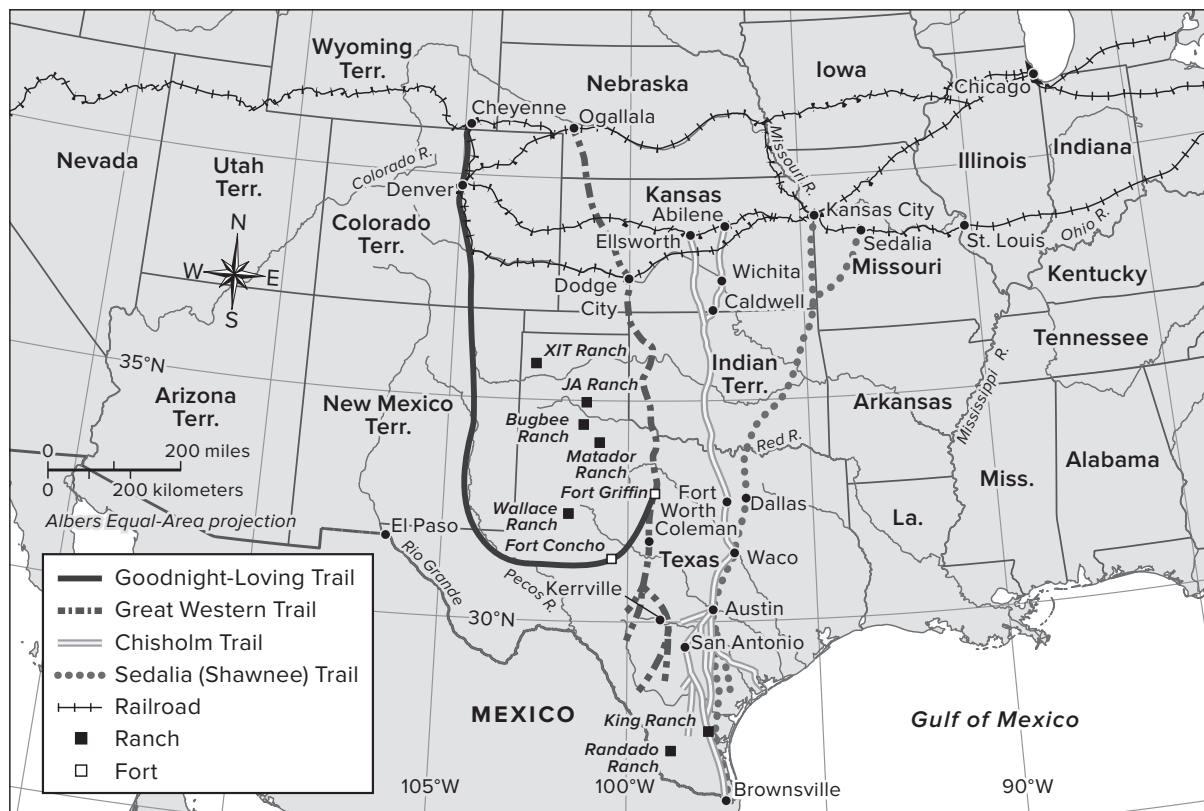
**fee** money charged in exchange for a service or permission to take an action

**image** a set of partly unreal ideas associated with a person or object

**wrangler** a ranch hand who takes care of saddle horses

**quarantine** a state of enforced isolation designed to prevent the spread of disease or pests

#### Where in the world?



## Cattle and Cotton

### Lesson 1: The Cattle Kingdom, *continued*

#### Defining

1. What does *ranchero* mean?

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#### Identifying

2. What factors led to the expansion of cattle ranching in the late 1700s?

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#### Marking the Text

3. Highlight information about Spanish ranching practices.



#### Reading Progress Check

4. Why was it important for ranchers to brand their cattle?

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#### Defining

5. What is a drover?

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## Origins and Rise of Cattle Ranching

**Guiding Question** *In what ways did the Spanish influence ranching in Texas?*

Spanish settlers brought the first cattle to the area in the late 1600s. In the 1730s, friars began raising cattle for food. Spanish **rancheros**, or ranchers, began ranching, too.

In the late 1700s, people began raising cattle for profit, not just for food. Ranching also spread to southeastern Texas. This occurred due to two factors:

- The Spanish government provided land grants to rancheros.
- Spain gained possession of Louisiana.

Texas ranchers could lead their herds to Louisiana to find more buyers and get higher prices. This began the first cattle **drives**.

When Anglo Americans came in the 1820s and 1830s, ranching practices were well established. Cowboys were called *vaqueros* after the Spanish word *vaca* for “cow.” They herded cattle into *corrales*, or corrals. Cattle were marked with earmarks or by branding to show ownership.

Anglo American ranchers adopted many Spanish traditions. Like Spanish *vaqueros*, Anglo Americans used branding to show ownership. The arrival of Anglo Americans also led to a new breed of cattle. Spanish and English cattle were mixed to produce the Texas longhorn.

Later, after independence, some Anglo ranchers claimed lands that had belonged to Mexicans who fled during the Revolution. Other Anglo Americans purchased land. Some ranchers grazed their cattle on the **open range**, which was public or unclaimed land. Richard King established one of Texas’s largest ranches: King Ranch.

## Cattle Markets Expand

**Guiding Question** *How did the market for Texas cattle expand after the Civil War?*

Small-scale cattle drives from Texas to New Orleans took place in the early 1830s. In the 1840s and 1850s, **drovers**, or people who drive cattle to market, used the Shawnee Trail to bring cattle to what is today Oklahoma. Ranchers also drove cattle to California, where the Gold Rush had triggered a huge population increase.

During the Civil War, the Texas cattle industry declined. Ranchers and cowhands were drawn into the army and the state was cut off from much of the nation. After the war, the industry grew again.

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### Lesson 1: The Cattle Kingdom, *continued*

Renewed demand plus railroad construction outside Texas helped expand the market. In 1866 ranchers began driving huge numbers of cattle to **stockyards** in Missouri. The cattle were then shipped by rail, many of them to Chicago. Driving cattle to market was cheap. The first postwar drives made huge profits.

However, the Texas longhorns came north with a disease called Texas fever. The longhorns were immune to it, but it infected other breeds. Angry ranchers outside Texas did not want longhorns near their animals. They blocked the trails used by the Texas drovers.

Texas fever threatened to end the great Texas cattle drives the very year that they began. Joseph G. McCoy, a cattle buyer in Illinois, found a solution. McCoy urged railroads to build towns farther west. Texas drovers could then avoid Missouri. With so much money to be made, the railroads and the drovers agreed to McCoy's plan. Kansas and Illinois also agreed to let the cattle over their borders.

For a time, Abilene, Kansas, was the major destination for Texas cattle. Most drovers took the Chisholm Trail to get there. Named after Jesse Chisholm, the trail began in South Texas. After passing through Waco, it then turned west. More than 5 million cattle were driven on the Chisholm Trail from 1867 to 1884.

Over time, ranches sprang up along the Chisholm Trail. Range land became settled and more fencing was built, making the trail difficult to use. Also, Native Americans began charging drovers **fees** for crossing their reservations. As a result, by about 1876 the Western Trail had become the major cattle route. It headed north through Texas and into present-day Oklahoma with major railway depots in Dodge City, Kansas, and Ogallala, Nebraska.

The Goodnight-Loving Trail started in Central Texas. It swung west through New Mexico to Colorado and then to Wyoming. From there cattle went by rail to California or Chicago. Before the 1880s when more railroads were built in the Southwest, drovers in Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado heavily used the Goodnight-Loving Trail.

## Cowboys and Life on the Trail

**Guiding Question** *What was the job of cowboys who worked on the open range?*

Much of the popular **image** of the Old West is based on the life of the cowboy on the range. The cowboy became a lasting symbol of the West, but that symbol was based on both reality and fantasy. Movies portrayed cowboys as big, law-abiding Anglo American men or as rough outlaws. In reality, ranching was tough, dangerous work. Many cowhands were Mexican American or African American.

### Explaining

6. How did Joseph G. McCoy help the Texas cattle industry?

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### Marking the Text

7. Circle the names of major cattle trails Texan ranchers used to drive cattle to market.



### Reading Progress Check

8. What two factors caused some drovers to switch from using the Chisholm Trail to the Western Trail?

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### Comparing

9. How does the reality of cowboys in the Old West compare to the popular image?

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## Cattle and Cotton

### Lesson 1: The Cattle Kingdom, *continued*



#### Determining Word Meaning

10. What did the wrangler do on a cattle drive?

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#### Marking the Text

11. Circle four different jobs that were done on a cattle drive.



#### Reading Progress Check

12. Why did the great Texas cattle drives end?

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A crew of around 12 could drive about 2,000 cattle. There was a trail boss to lead the crew and a cook to feed them. One ranch hand worked as a **wrangler**, caring for the crew's horses. The rest of the cowboys were drovers.

Trail drives began in the spring and lasted through the fall. The herd would travel about 10 miles a day for weeks or months. The cattle formed long lines that stretched for miles. Drovers rode alongside them.

Cattle drives meant 18-hour days in the saddle. Most cowboys were young, were unmarried, and earned low wages. In the winter, cowboys had to find other work to survive.

Cattle drives could be dangerous. One great danger was getting the cattle safely across waterways. Stampedes were the other great danger. When frightened, entire herds could run wild and trample anything in their path.

By the late 1880s, the great cattle drives had ended. They ended for several reasons:

- In 1885 new outbreaks of Texas fever caused Kansas and other states to **quarantine** Texas herds.
- Cattle prices fell.
- More farmers and ranchers installed fencing. This blocked the drovers' trails.
- Rail lines made cattle drives unnecessary.

## Writing

### Check for Understanding

1. **Expository** What was the purpose of the great cattle drives?

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2. **Expository** Summarize the challenges the cowboys may have faced on a cattle drive.

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