

# The Cattle Drives and Westward Expansion



How did the cattle drives influence Westward Expansion?

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# Objectives:

**Students will learn the location of the three major cattle trails through what becomes Oklahoma.**

**Students will discover the purpose of the cattle drives.**

**Students will understand the influence of the cattle drives on Westward Expansion.**

After the Civil War there was a demand for beef in the  
There were a lot of longhorn cattle in Texas. The question  
was how to get them from Texas to the east.

This was the beginning of the cattle drives.

The cowboys brought them from Texas to Kansas  
and put them on trains to ship them to the east.



**When the men from Texas went off to fight in the Civil War, much of the cattle were left to fend for themselves in the wild. This developed a breed of cattle that were hardy enough to endure the long cattle drives.**



**In Texas, one head of cattle would bring \$4, but in Kansas it would bring \$40.**

Some of the longhorns that spent most of their time in the wild would  
They v

**Texas longhorns are descendants of the cattle that Christopher Columbus brought to North America.**



Photo by: Glenda Sullivan



# Night Hawks



At night the cowboys would take 2-hour shifts to make sure the herd stayed together. They were often called “Night Hawks”. The cowboys would stand on their horses in a circle around the cattle, often singing to them to keep the cattle calm and to keep themselves awake.

Every cowboy had a position in relationship to the herd. Each of these positions had a ranking based on the cowboy's experience.



Photo by: Glenda Sullivan

There were some females that rode in the cattle drives. Some of them were disguised as men. There was a woman, Margaret Hefferman-Borland, that drove her own herd from Victoria, Texas to Kansas.



The cattle drives usually started in early June and lasted until mid-September

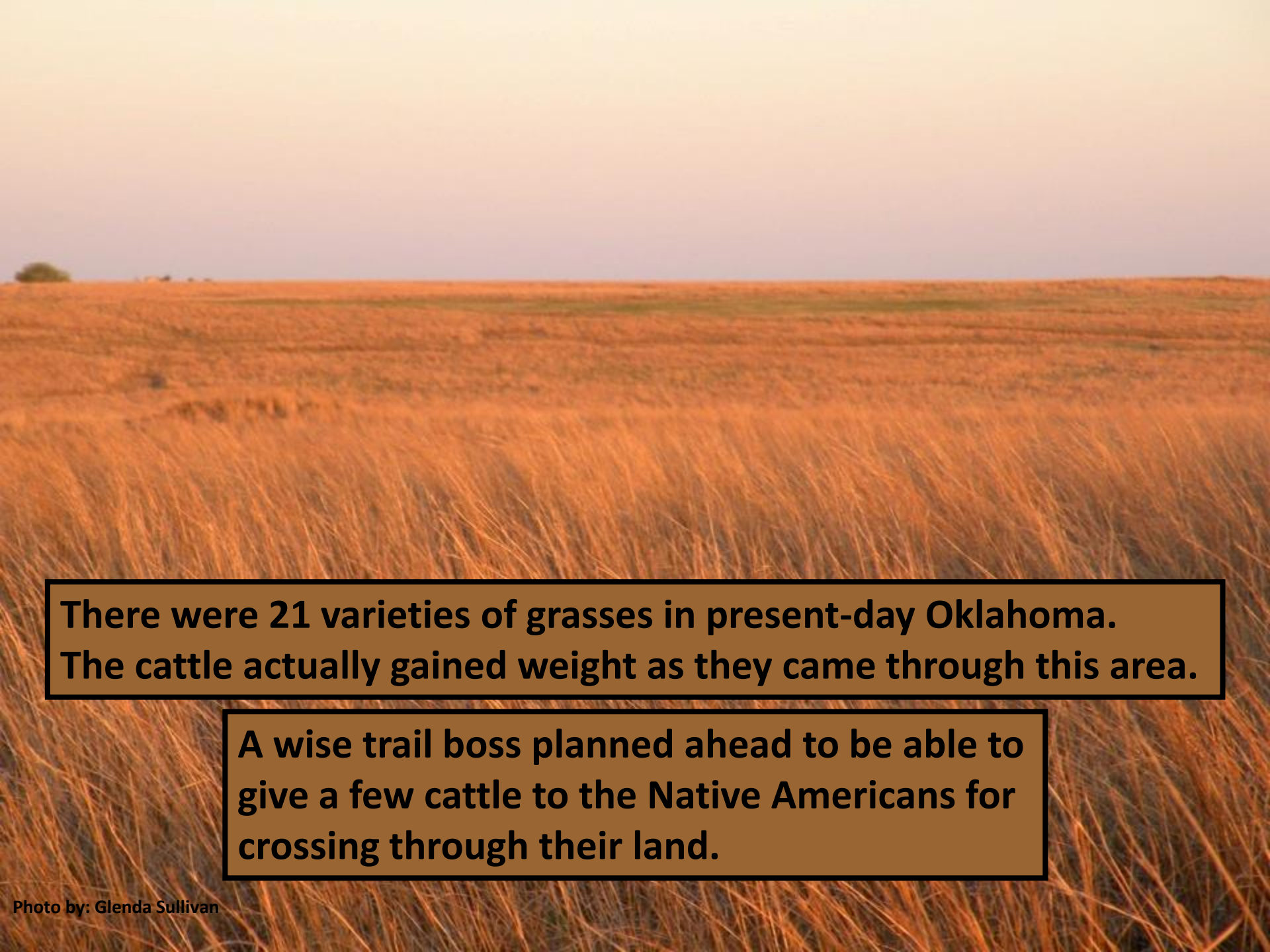


Photo by: John Sullivan

The timing of the cattle drives was important:

- 1. They needed the spring grass for the cattle to eat.*
- 2. They needed to avoid crossing flooded rivers.*
- 3. They had to make it north before winter.*



A wide-angle photograph of a vast, flat landscape covered in tall, golden-brown grass. The horizon is straight and distant, with a few small, dark trees visible on the left. The sky is a pale, clear blue. The overall scene is bright and open.

**There were 21 varieties of grasses in present-day Oklahoma.  
The cattle actually gained weight as they came through this area.**

**A wise trail boss planned ahead to be able to  
give a few cattle to the Native Americans for  
crossing through their land.**



**There were about 2500-3000 cattle in each herd, although some herds were as large as 10,000 head.**



**Photo by: Glenda Sullivan**



**Cottonwood trees were a good indicator of water on the trail.**



[http://shelledy.mesa.k12.co.us/staff/computerlab/ColoradoLifeZones\\_Riparian\\_Plants.html](http://shelledy.mesa.k12.co.us/staff/computerlab/ColoradoLifeZones_Riparian_Plants.html)

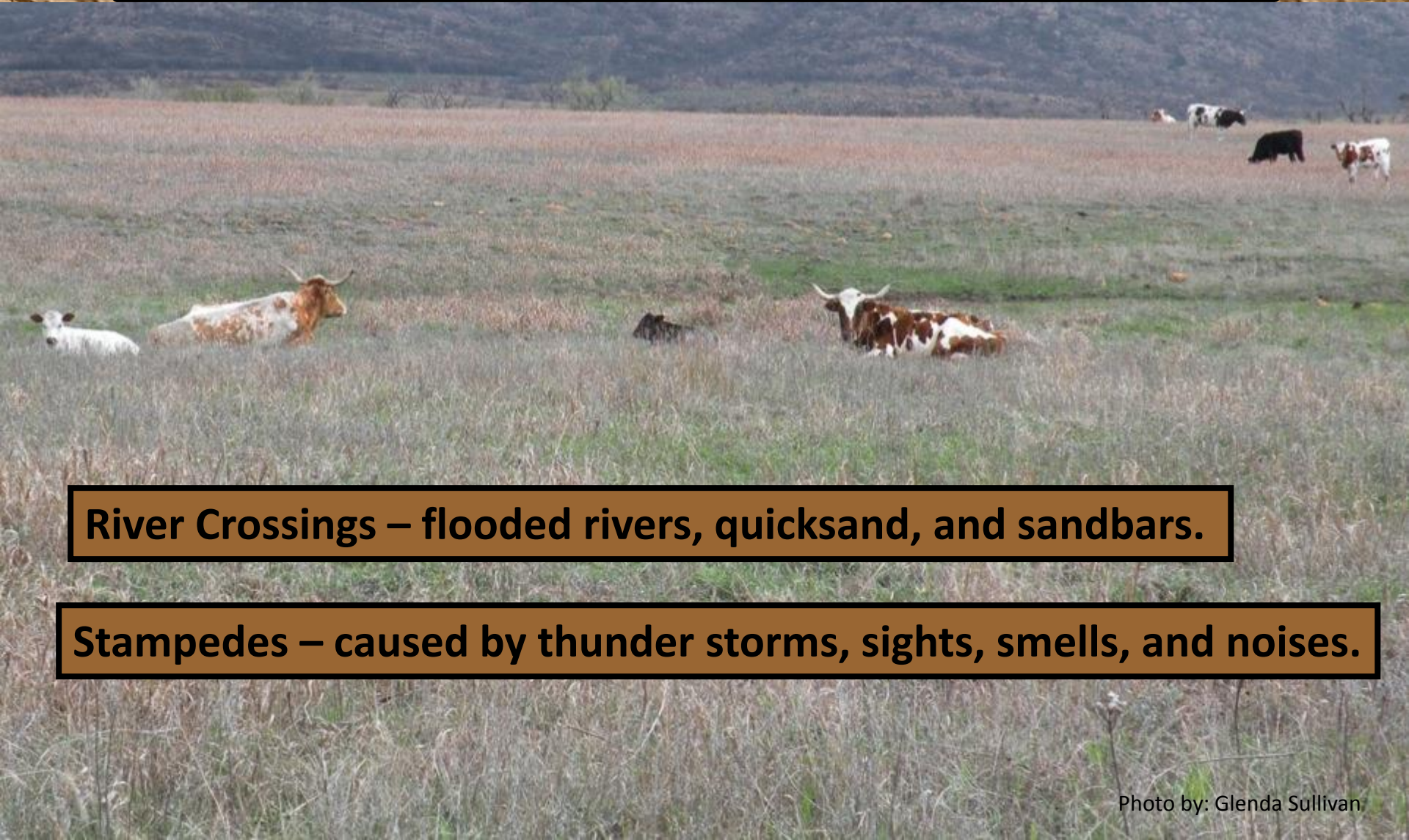
**During a drought, the smell of water would cause the thirsty cattle to go crazy.**



[http://www.cirrusimage.com/tree\\_cottonwood.htm](http://www.cirrusimage.com/tree_cottonwood.htm)



# Hardships Along the Trail



**River Crossings – flooded rivers, quicksand, and sandbars.**

**Stampedes – caused by thunder storms, sights, smells, and noises.**

Photo by: Glenda Sullivan





[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle\\_drives\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle_drives_in_the_United_States)

**To stop a stampede, the cowboys in front would turn the cattle to the right causing them to move in a circular motion.**

**The cowboys at the back would slowly bring the rest of the herd into the circle. The riders would keep pushing them and make the circle get smaller and smaller.**

**Markers like this have been set at every section line along the trail in Oklahoma.**

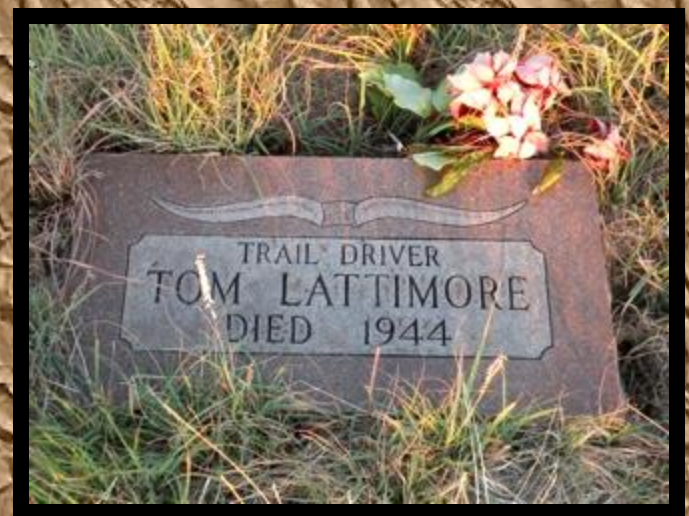


**Ruts from the Chisholm Trail can still be seen today.**





**Addington, OK**



**There were 3 major  
cattle trails**

**The Shawnee Trail**

**The Chisholm Trail**

**The Western Trail**



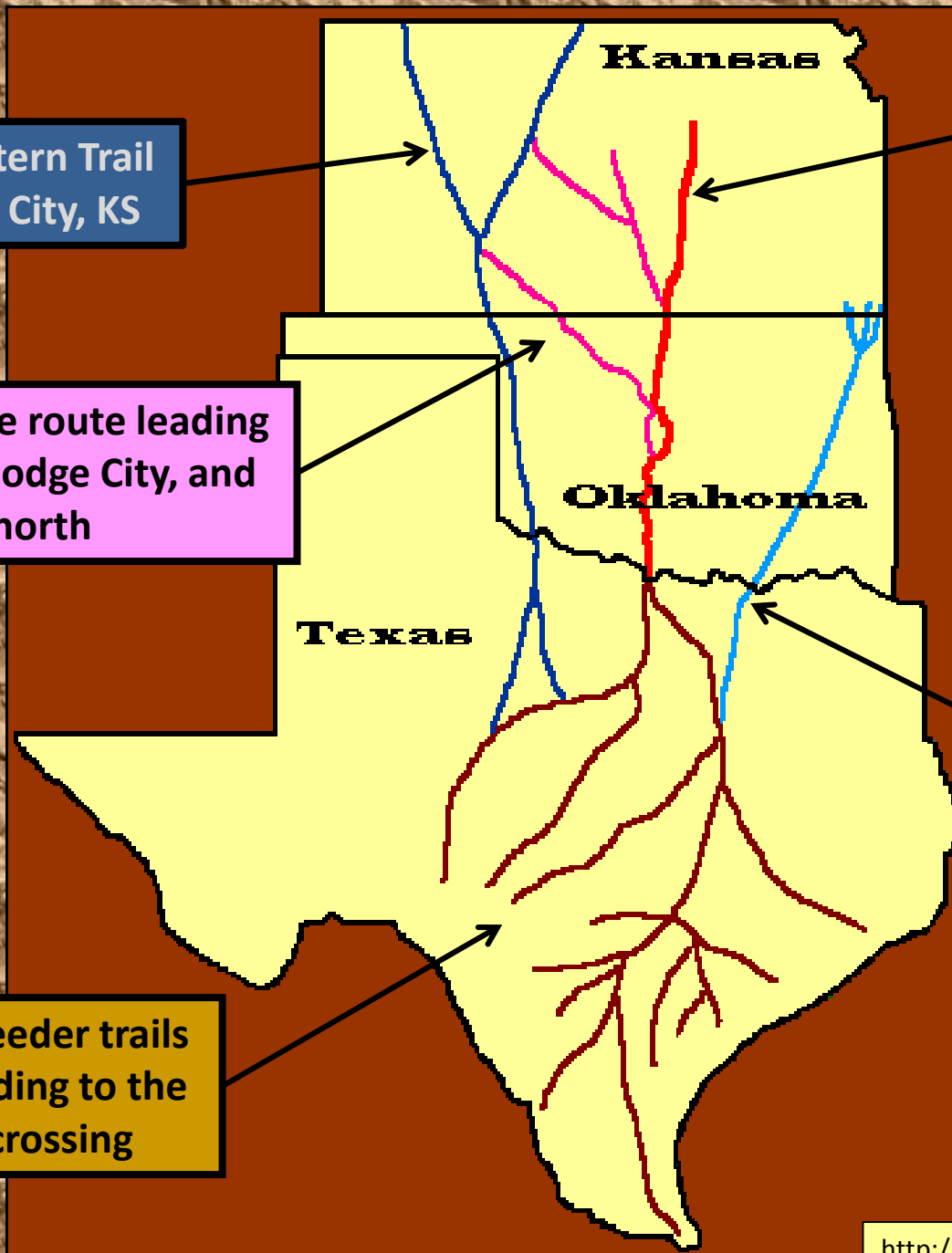
**DK Blue – Western Trail  
went to Dodge City, KS**

**Red – Chisholm Trail**

**Pink – alternate route leading  
To Ellsworth, Dodge City, and  
points farther north**

**Lt. Blue – Shawnee Trail**

**Brown – Feeder trails  
mostly leading to the  
Red River crossing**



# WHAT WAS THE "SHAWNEE TRAIL?"

Westward expansion of farming started to change things. In 1853, farmers wouldn't allow Texas cattle for fear of them bringing "Tick Fever or T" would infect their herds.



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<http://www.bethlehemtrail.com/begin1.htm>

<http://www.wyomingtalesandtrails.com/cattle.html>



# WHAT WAS THE “CHISHOLM TRAIL”?

Jesse Chisholm, a half Cherokee trader, carried freight between Kansas and his trading posts

Although it had many different names, it was most often referred to as the Chisholm Trail.

and trees, this trail was adapted by the cattle drives, therefore becoming known as the “Chisholm Trail”.

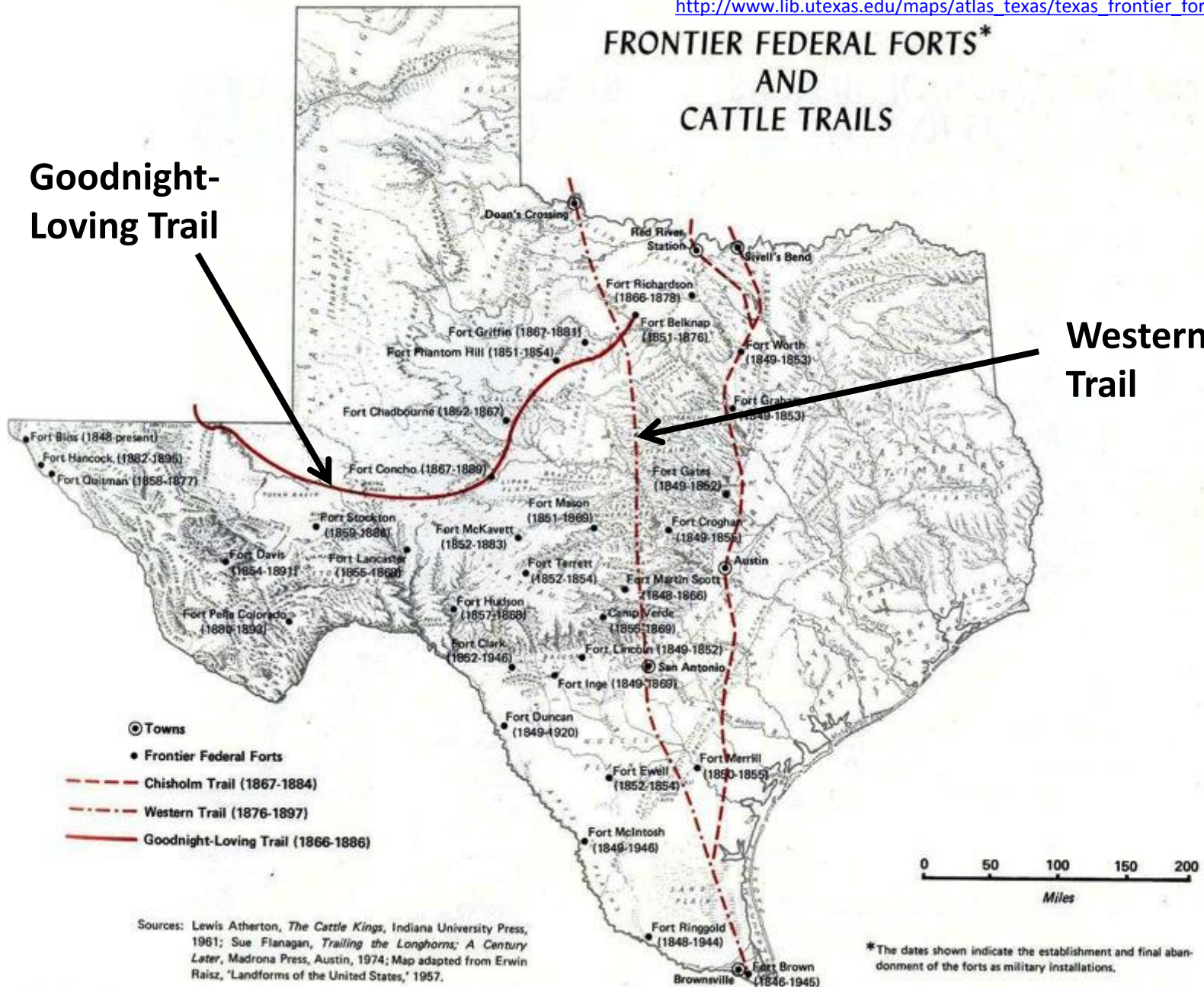




## FRONTIER FEDERAL FORTS\* AND CATTLE TRAILS

Goodnight-  
Loving Trail

Western  
Trail











<http://doublehelixranch.com/FAQ.html>

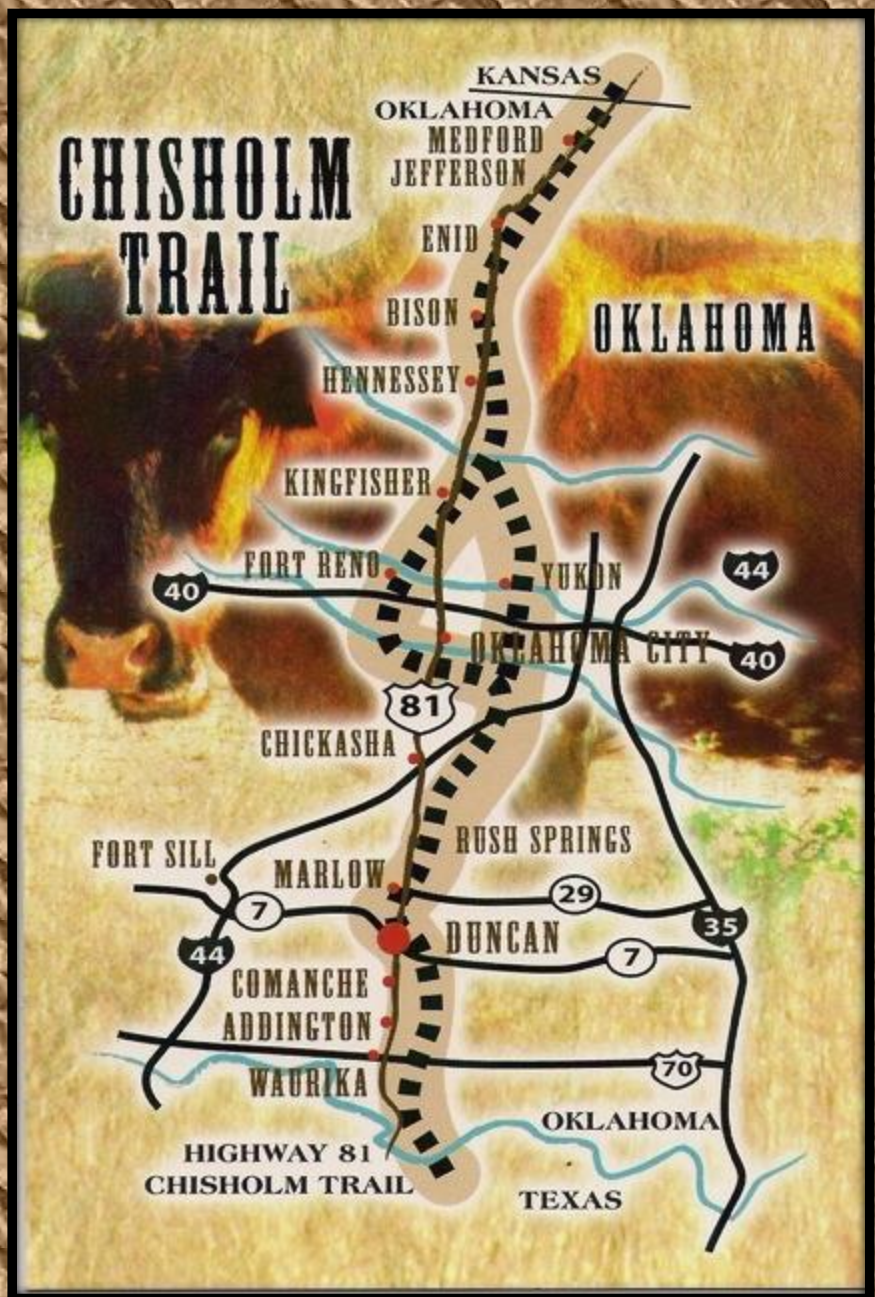
**Goodnight and his men would put them in a numbered sack. They rode in the sacks during the day and were returned to their mothers at night.**

**and stay with their mothers at night.**





**What will you find along the Chisholm Trail today?**



Because of the westward expansion of the railroads, many "Cow towns" sprang up near the railheads.

Due to the long distance traveled on the cattle drives, rest stops were needed along the way for both the animals and the cowboys.

Many of these rest stops became towns along the trails northward.





<http://www.freepik.com/free-photo/ba>



<http://all-about-steam-engines.html>

# End of the Trail



[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Farm\\_in\\_frederick\\_maryland.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Farm_in_frederick_maryland.jpg)



<http://glossi.com/mshay/52641>

# Cause

# &

# Effect

**Men went off the fight in the Civil War.**



**There was a demand for beef in the eastern region of the United States.**



**A law was passed banning Texas cattle from entering the state of Missouri.**





# Cause

# &

# Effect

**Sometimes strange noises and thunderstorms would spook the cattle and cause them to stampede.**



**There were 21 varieties of grass in the Oklahoma Territory.**



**Most of the cattle drives were long and tiring.**



# Assignment

1. Choose a town that developed along one of the cattle trails.
2. Research information on how the cattle drives influenced the development of that town.
3. Write a report from information gathered.



# Round Rock, Texas



The most famous one was Brushy Creek.

The cattle trails took many routes around this area of Texas.

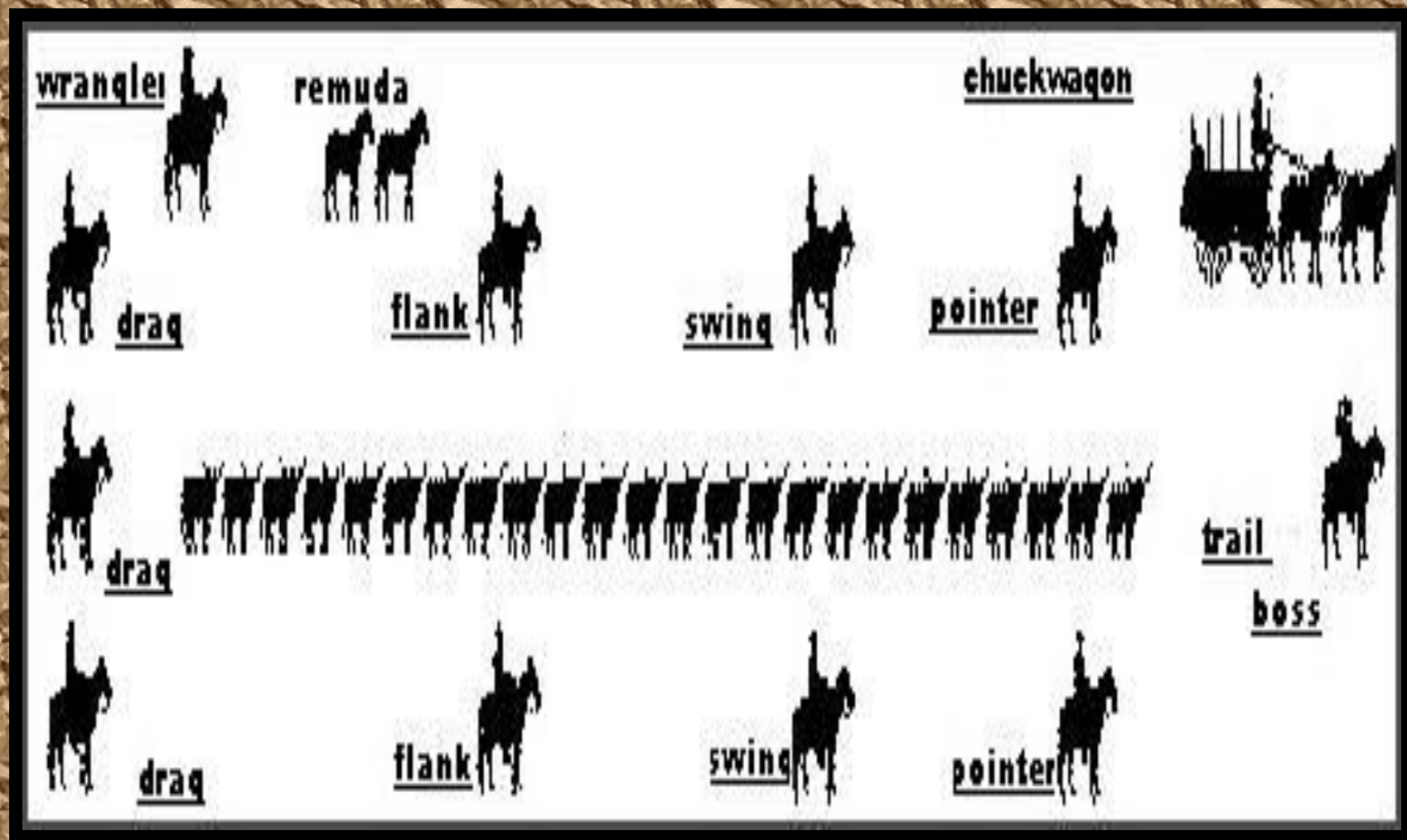
as.

renamed Round Rock.

**Extension Activity:**



# Order of the Trail



Every c  
Each of  
cowboy

herd.



<http://houston.culture>

[http://myweb.midco.net/~Mr\\_H2/cowboy.htm](http://myweb.midco.net/~Mr_H2/cowboy.htm)

[p-the-restaurant-scene/](#)

**Chuck Wagon Cook (Cookie)** - first one up in the morning(3am) and usually last one to bed at night (after all dishes were washed); served not only as cook, but barber, banker, doctor, dentist, settler of disputes, letter writer, father figure, and morale booster.

*Experience level: high      Paid about \$60/month (twice what the cowboys were paid)*



**Point** – the lead riders; the most honored position. Working in pairs, they set the pace as they guided the cattle.

*Experience level: high*

*Paid about \$30/month*

**Swing** – they rode about a third of the way back of the herd keeping the cattle together.

*Experience level: some*

*Paid about \$30/month*

**Flank** – they rode about two-thirds of the way back of the herd and kept any of the cattle from getting too far from the herd.

*Experience level: some*

*Paid about \$30/month*

**Wrangler** – the horse handler; usually a young boy. He had to know who each horse belonged to and keep them together. The cowboys had about 8-10 horses each (the cowboys needed a good swimmer, a night horse, etc.)

*Experience level: must be good with horses*

*Paid about \$25/month*

**Drag** – the least favorite position; they were at the back getting to eat all the dust. They pushed the cattle ahead.

*Experienced level: none*

*Paid about \$30/month*



**Write a journal from the viewpoint of one of the cowboys on the trail.**

**Include a description of the following events in your journal:**

- *Crossing a river*
- *A Stampede*
- *Description of the land as you travel*
- *Mealtime*