
CATTLE DRIVE GLOSSARY (TERM LIST C)

brand | Each ranch had a marking that identified cattle belonging to its herd. This mark, applied to a calf's hide with a red-hot branding iron, discouraged theft.

cattle drive | The process of moving a herd of cattle from the range to the market, usually moved and herded by cowboys on horses. The outfit (cattle, riders, chuck wagon) usually traveled about twelve miles each day.

cattle trail | A trail over which cattle were driven to market. Texas had four main cattle trails—Chisholm, Goodnight-Loving, Western, and Sedalia.

chuck wagon | A wagon that carried the food (such as canned milk, vegetables, and dried fruits), as well as the bedrolls and water barrel for an outfit. Created by legendary rancher, Charles Goodnight. (Ranked next to the trail boss, **cooks** were elder cowboys and could no longer work with the cattle. They prepared food for the cowboys three times a day and were the first to rise each morning to prepare breakfast and roust the wrangler and was often referred to as “cookie.”)

drag rider | Least experienced riders in the most undesirable position behind the herd because of the dust; push the weaker, lagging cattle to keep from slowing the herd down.

drover | A working cowboy who drives cattle from the range to market.

flank rider | Cowboy who works at keeping the formation intact near the back of the herd.

longhorn | One of a breed of long-horned beef cattle of the southwestern U.S., developed from cattle introduced into North America from Spain and valued for disease resistance.

point rider | Experienced drovers at the front of the herd who move and guide the cattle in the desired direction. Also known as “pointers.”

ranchero | One employed on a ranch, especially in the southwestern US and Mexico; a rancher.

remuda | A Spanish word for “relay of horses.” This was the term adopted to refer to the large herd of extra horses gathered for roundups or trail drives. Each cowboy had a string of six or more horses for his use. (When they were not on the move with the herd, the horses were penned in a rope corral. The wrangler watched the remuda and would have fresh mounts ready for the cowboys in the morning, at noon, and in the evening.)

roundup | The act of gathering together cattle so that they may be branded, counted, sold, or driven in formation on a cattle drive.

stampede | A wild and uncontrollable rush by a herd of spooked cattle or horses.

swing rider | Cowboy who works at keeping the formation intact near the front of the herd and assists the pointers in guiding the cattle and keeping the herd together.

trail boss | Most experienced drover and overall leader of the cattle drive; works ahead looking for sources of water, grass for grazing, best trail routes, water crossings, and selects spots for evening campsites.

wrangler | A boy, too young to handle cattle, hired to herd the remuda on roundups or trail drives. The wrangler was also the cook's assistant—he dried and put away dishes, took care of the camp gear, and gathered the wood for the evening fire.
