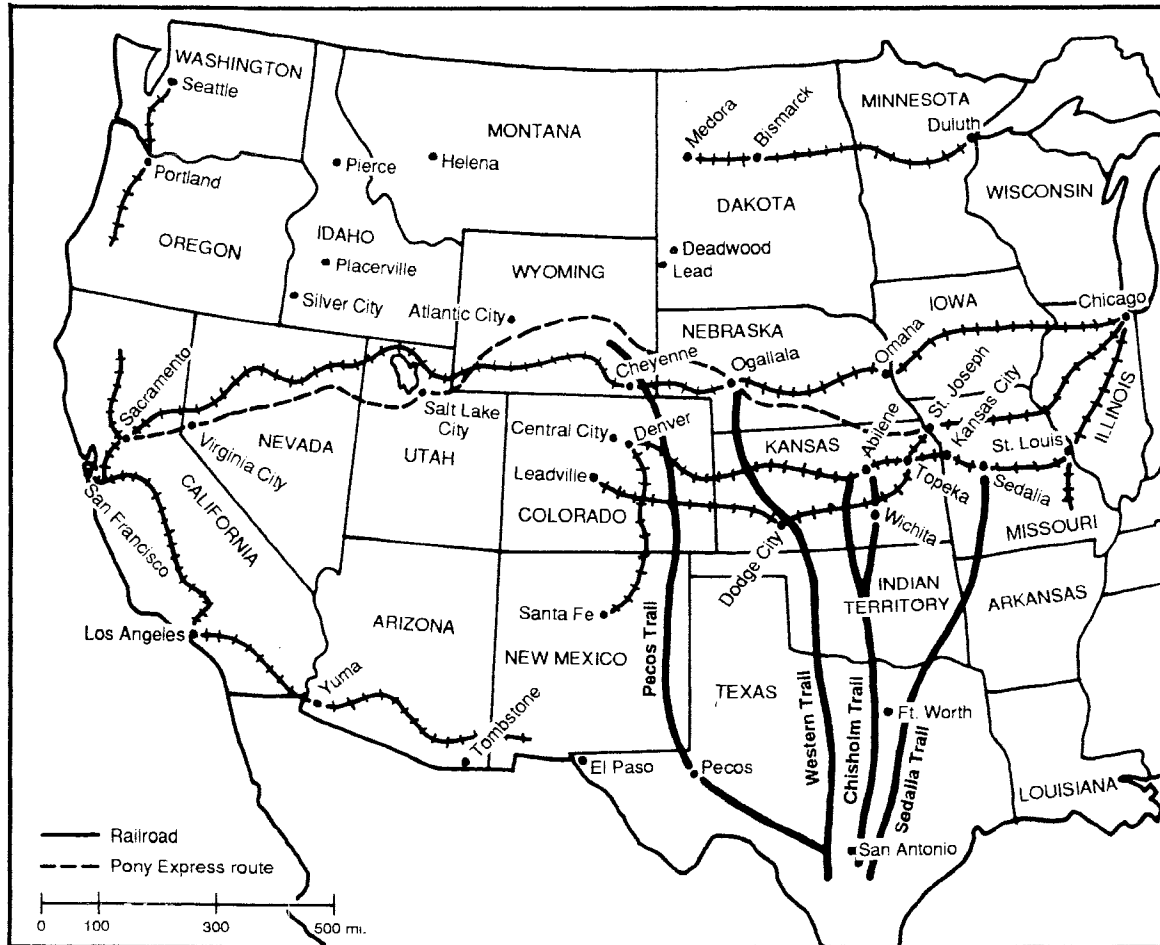


## The American West: When Cattle Was King

Part A. Below is a map showing the cities, trails, railroads and pony express routes in the American West in 1880. Use the map and your textbook to answer the questions that follow.



1. In what state did all of the cattle trails begin?
2. Which major cattle trail was farthest west?

<sup>1</sup>Richard Wade et al., *A History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970), 93.

3. Which major cattle trail was farthest east?
4. What was the terminal point of the Chisolm Trail?
5. Which cattle trail was the longest?
6. Which cattle trail went through Dodge City, Kansas?
7. Which state had the most joinings of railroads and cattle trails?
8. What were the beginning and ending points for the Pony Express?
9. What city was the eastern origin for many railroads that travelled west?

Part B. The uniform of the cowboy has become part of his legacy. In fact, the uniform was very practical. Listed below are five parts of the uniform. After each part, state the practical purpose for each item.

1. Wide-brimmed hat:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Bandanna:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Chaps:

4. High-heeled boots:

5. Spurs:

Part C. Following are excerpts from Andy Adams' *Log of a Cowboy* and Nat Love's autobiography. Read each excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

"Boys, the secret of trailing cattle is never to let your herd know that they are under restraint. Let everything that is done be done voluntarily by the cattle. From the moment you let them off the bed ground in the morning until they are bedded at night, never let a cow take a step, except in the direction of its destination. In this manner you can loaf away the day, and cover from fifteen to twenty miles, and the herd in the mean time will enjoy all the freedom of an open range. Of course, it's long, tiresome hours to the men; but the condition of the herd and saddle stock demands sacrifices on our part, if any have to be made. And I want to caution you younger boys about your horses; there is such a thing as having ten horses in your string, and at the same time being afoot. You are well mounted, and on the condition of the remuda depends the success and safety of the herd. Accidents will happen to horses, but don't let it be your fault; keep your saddle blankets dry and clean, for no better word can be spoken of a man than that he is careful of his horses. Ordinarily a man might get along with six or eight horses, but in such emergencies as we are liable to meet, we have not a horse to spare, and a man afoot is useless."<sup>2</sup>

1. What was the secret of driving the cattle successfully?
2. How far did the cowboy hope to drive the cattle on any given day?
3. What was the remuda?

<sup>2</sup>Andy Adams, *The Log of a Cowboy*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 28–29.

4. What is the normal number of horses needed for each cowboy?

. . . We had not been on the trail over two hours before the heat became almost unbearable to man and beast. Had it not been for the condition of the herd, all might yet have gone well; but over three days had now elapsed without water for the cattle, and they became feverish and ungovernable. The lead cattle turned back several times, wandering aimlessly in any direction, and it was with considerable difficulty that the herd could be held on the trail. The rear overtook the lead, and the cattle gradually lost all semblance of a trail herd . . . [they] congregated into a mass of unmanageable animals, milling and lowing in their fever and thirst. . . . No sooner was the milling stopped than they would surge hither and yon, sometimes half a mile, as ungovernable as the waves of an ocean. After wasting several hours in this manner, they finally turned back over the trail, and the utmost efforts of every man in the outfit failed to check them. We threw our ropes in their faces, and when this failed, we resorted to shooting; but in defiance of the fusillade and the smoke they walked sullenly through the line of horsemen across their front. Six-shooters were discharged so close to the leaders' face as to singe their hair, yet, under a noonday sun, they disregarded this and every other device to turn them, and passed wholly out of our control. In a number of instances wild steers deliberately walked against our horses, and then for the first time a fact dawned on us that chilled the marrow in our bones,—*the herd was going blind.*<sup>3</sup>

1. What happens to cattle when they do not have water?
2. How did the cowboys try to regain control of their herds?

In the stillness of those splendid July nights we could hear the point men chatting across the lead in front, while in the rear, the rattling of our heavily loaded wagon and the whistling of the horse wrangler to his charges reached our ears. The swing men were scattered so far apart there was no chance for conversation amongst us, but every once in a while a song would be started, and as it surged up and down the line, every voice, good, bad, and indifferent, joined in.<sup>4</sup>

1. Why did the cowboys sing?

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 62–64.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 313–314.

On reaching Dodge, we rode up to the Wright House, where [the foreman] met us and directed our cavalcade across the railroad to a livery stable. . . . We unsaddled and turned our horses into a large corral, and while we were in the office of the livery, surrendering our artillery, [the foreman] came in and handed each of us twenty-five dollars in gold, warning us that when that was gone no more would be advanced. On receipt of the money, we scattered like partridges before a gunner. Within an hour or two, we began to return to the stable by ones and twos, and were stowing into our saddle pockets our purchases, which ran from needles and thread to .45 cartridges, every mother's son reflecting the art of the barber, [one of the cowboys] had his blond mustaches blackened, waxed, and curled like a French dancing master. . . .

After packing away our plunder, we sauntered around town, drinking moderately, and visiting the various saloons and gambling houses. . . .<sup>5</sup>

1. How much pay did each cowboy receive when he arrived at Dodge City?
2. What were some of the purchases that the cowboy made at Dodge?

When we were not on the trail taking large herds of cattle or horses to market to be delivered to other ranches, we were engaged in range riding, moving large numbers of cattle from one grazing range to another, keeping them together, and hunting up strays which, despite the most earnest efforts of the range riders would get away from the main herd and wander for miles over the plains before they could be found, overtaken, and returned to the main herd.

Then the Indians and the white outlaws who infested the country gave us no end of trouble, as they lost no opportunity to cut out and run off the choicest part of a herd of longhorns, or the best of a band of horses, causing the cowboys a ride of many a long mile over the dusty plains in pursuit. . . . [Many] are the fierce engagements we had, when after a long chase of perhaps hundreds of miles over the ranges we overtook the thieves. It then became a case of "to the victor belongs the spoils," as there was no law respected in this wild country, except the law of might and the persuasive qualities of a 45 Colt pistol.

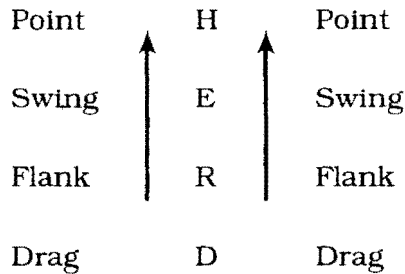
Accordingly it became absolutely necessary for a cowboy to understand his gun and know how to place its contents where it would do the most good. . . . [Therefore] I in common with my other companions never lost an opportunity to practice with my 45 Colts. . . . [The] opportunities were not lacking by any means and so in time I became fairly proficient and able in most cases to hit a barn door, providing the door was not too far away. . . . [I] was steadily improving in this as I was in experience and knowledge of the other branches of the business which I had chosen as my life's work and which I had begun to like so well. . . . [While] the life was hard and in some ways exacting, yet it was free and wild and contained the elements of danger which my nature craved and which began to manifest itself when I was a . . . youngster on the old plantation in our rock battles and the breaking of the wild horses. I gloried in the danger, and the wild and free life of the plains, the new country I was continually traversing, and the many new scenes and incidents continually arising in the life of a rough rider.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 198–199.

<sup>6</sup>From Nat Love, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love, Better Known in the Cattle Country as Deadwood Dick*. (Los Angeles, CA: Ayer Company, 1907).

1. Why did Indians and outlaws harass the herd?
2. What kind of a shot was Nat Love?
3. Why did Nat Love enjoy being a cowboy?

Part D. When the long drive occurred, each cowboy had a particular responsibility. Use the diagram below to identify the job of each cowboy. Answer the questions that follow.



1. Point
  2. Swing
  3. Flank
  4. Drag
1. Why did most experienced cowboys prefer to ride point?
  2. Why were the younger cowboys forced to ride drag?
  3. How has this lesson changed your concept of the life of a cowboy?