

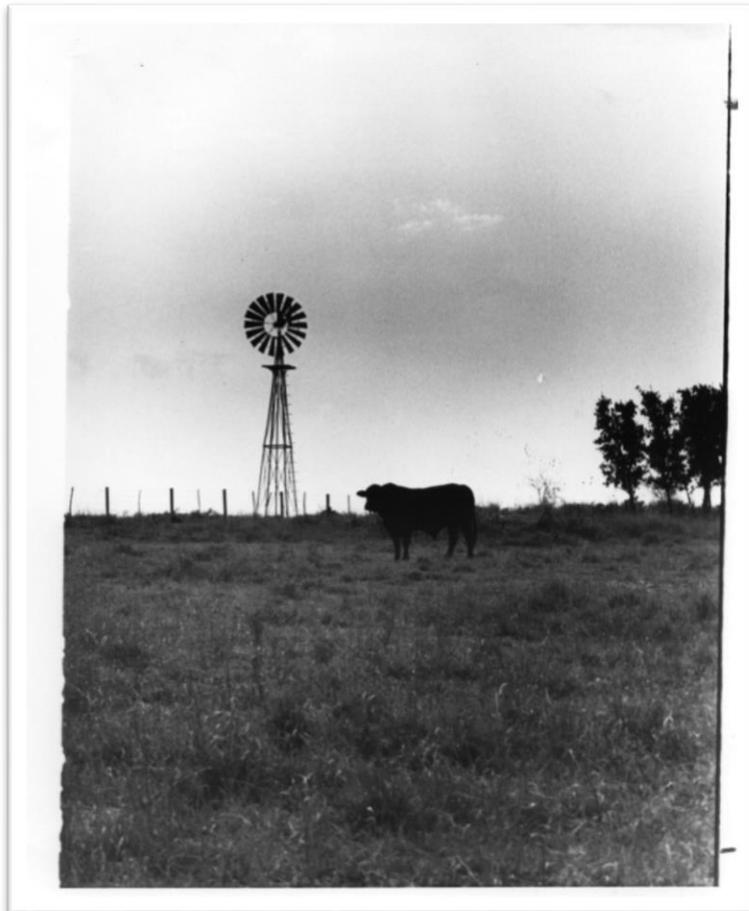
The End of the Open Range

Lesson Plan for 4th- 7th Grades - Social Science and History

OBJECTIVES

The students will understand the issue of cattle drives in the late 19th century. The students will understand the transition to enclosed ranches. They will also explore the innovation that led to the closed range. The students will understand the economic and social impact that the Cattle Trails and Cattle industry had on Texas.

TEKS or Unit of Study: 1-A identify major era in Texas History; 6 A & B - development of the cattle industry - political, economic, and social impact of the cattle industry; 13B- impact of free enterprise and supply & demand on Texas economy.



VERIFICATION AND INTRODUCTION

Imagine that you are a rancher in Texas. You have raised cattle on the open plains of Texas for many years. You begin noticing fences on the range that section off large areas of land. How might these fences affect your method of ranching?

1. Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of the cattle industry.
2. Analyze the effects of barbed wire and the windmill on the ranching industry.
3. Identify the myths and realities of the barbed wire

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

With the invention of barbed wire, rangelands were enclosed, the cattle drives ended, and a new way of moving cattle to emerging markets was introduced. The success of the ranching industry also created unexpected issues. As more ranchers moved into Texas, the range became crowded. The Grazing pastures could not support the growing number of cattle. Ranchers tried to keep track of their cattle and separate them from other herds, but this proved to be difficult. Also, farmers moved on to the range after Native Americans were confined to reservations. They farmed on the same lands the cattle needed to roam. A conflict over use of the land was unavoidable.

Barbed Wire and Windmills: Essentials in Enclosing the Range

Before the invention of barbed wire, cattle fences were made of wood, thorn bushes, mud, or rocks. But, in the 1870s, the cattle industry spread onto the treeless Great Plains. Many of the materials used elsewhere were not available or practical. By 1875, Illinois businessmen Joseph Glidden and Isaac Ellwood began manufacturing Glidden's patented wire design in large quantities. Their chief sales agent for Texas was Henry B. Sanborn.



The expansion of large ranches, multiplying herds of livestock, and barbed wire all served to close the **open range in Texas**.

In 1876, wire salesman John Gates demonstrated the wire to skeptical cattlemen. He made a barbed wire corral in front of the Alamo that penned longhorn cattle. Sale of wire increased quickly and made Glidden, Ellwood, and Sanborn rich. All three of them bought Texas ranches. They established and fenced the Frying Pan and the Spade ranches, among others. Sanborn was also the founder of Amarillo.

Barbed wire fencing also forced ranchers to seek additional sources of water. Ranchers like C. C. Slaughter were forced to drill water wells when neighboring ranchers fenced off water sources. Water was pumped to the surface with the aid of a windmill. In the 1880s, the cost of a windmill was around \$500 (\$20,000 today). The XIT began using windmills in 1887,

including one that was approximately ten stories tall.

Barbed wire and windmills brought about the closing of the once open range, ended the great trail driving era, and allowed ranchers to improve their land. By 1900, hundreds of windmills and thousands of miles of fences insured that ranchers could better use their grass, water and manpower.



ACTIVITY 1.

What put an end to the open range in Texas?

HISTORIC ENCLOSED RANCHES

The first ranches were all open range, except where natural boundaries provided enclosure. With the development of barbed wire in the 1870s, ranchers were able to fence large pastures and, by 1900, had created hundreds of big enclosed ranches, many of which still exist to this day.

Ranches in Texas were among the largest in the world. The biggest of these fenced ranches was the XIT, which included more than 3 million acres, a third larger than the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. The King Ranch, with more than 800,000 acres, is the largest in Texas today. The ranches on the map represent the Southwest's most historic operations. All are still operated and owned by descendants of the founders, except for the XIT, Matador, and Waggoner.



1. O'Connor Ranch, c. 1838

Established by Thomas O'Connor (1819-1887), began expansion in 1873 to 500,000 acres with 100,000 cattle. Was one of the first ranches to use barbed wire.

2. King Ranch, 1853

Established by Richard King (1824-1885) on 15,000 acres, and later expanded to 1.25 million acres with 125,000 cattle. Developed its own cattle breed, known as Santa Gertrudis.

3. Stuart Ranch, 1868

The oldest ranch in Oklahoma under the same family ownership. Established by Robert Clay Freeny (1812-1878) who was married to Sarah Ellis (1822-1878), granddaughter of a Choctaw chief and citizen of the Choctaw Nation. The ranch includes 40,000 acres in two divisions with the headquarters located near Caddo.



4. Waggoner Ranch, 1871

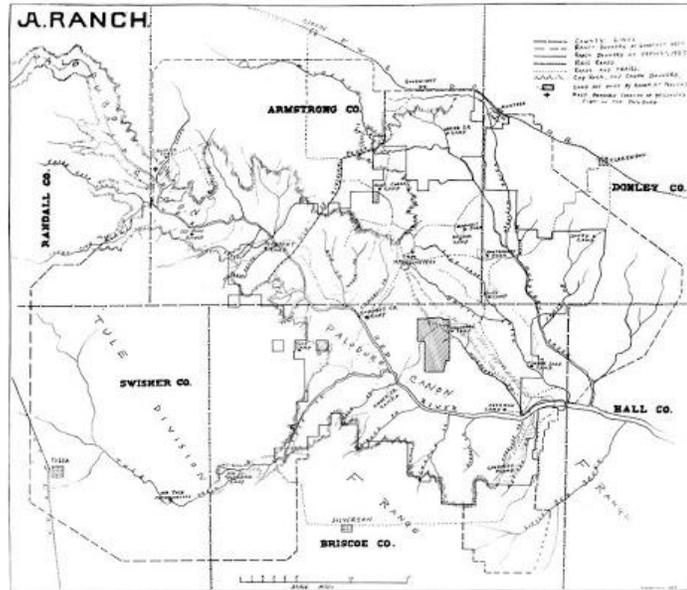
Established by Daniel Waggoner (1828-1902), and his son W.T. (Tom) Waggoner (1852-1934), and expanded in the 1880s to 550,000 acres, becoming the largest contiguous ranch behind a single fence. In 2016, Waggoner heirs sold the ranch to Stan and Ann (Walton) Kroenke.

5. CS Ranch, 1873

The CS Ranch was founded in 1873 by Frank Springer (1848-1927) near Cimarron, New Mexico on land purchased from the Maxwell Land Grant. Springer's grandson, Les Davis, became manager of the ranch in the late 1940's. He married Linda Mitchell, daughter of Albert K. Mitchell, in 1953, combining two of New Mexico's historic ranch families.

6. JA Ranch, 1876

Established by Charles Goodnight (1836-1929) and John G. Adair (1823-1885), expanded to 1.3 million acres on open range with 100,000 cattle, and subsequently enclosed to include 335,000 acres.



7. Slaughter Ranch, 1877

Established by C. C. Slaughter (1836-1919) and eventually encompassed more than one-half million acres in three divisions. Land was divided among ten heirs after his death, much of which remains in family ownership.

8. Matador Ranch 1878-1951

Established by Alfred M. Britton (1841-1911), and H. H. Campbell (1840-1911) and others, then sold in 1882 to Scottish investors in Dundee. At its height the ranch owned or leased three million acres, half of which were in Texas. The ranch was divided and sold in 1951.

9. Pitchfork land and Cattle Company, 1881

Established by Dan Gardner (1851-1928) and Eugene F. Williams (1851-1900), on 180,000 acres with 20,000 cattle at peak operation in the late 1880s. One of the few historic ranches to retain its original size and configuration to present time.

10. XIT Ranch, 1882-1912

Established by Capitol Syndicate of Chicago, which received a little over three million acres for construction of the Texas State Capitol Building. The Syndicate included John V. and Charles B. Farwell, Amos C. Babcock, and Abner Taylor. The ranch became one of the largest enclosed ranges in the world, 200 miles long and 30 miles wide and included 150,000 cattle. The ranch ceased operation in late 1912 with the sale of the last cattle.



11. Swenson Ranches, 1882

Established in three divisions by the first Swedish immigrant to Texas, S.M. Swenson (1816-1896) on 500,000 acres, much of it on property he had acquired in mercantile trade. Although reduced to 60,000 acres, the ranch is still owned and operated by the Swenson family.

12. Hitch Ranch, 1884

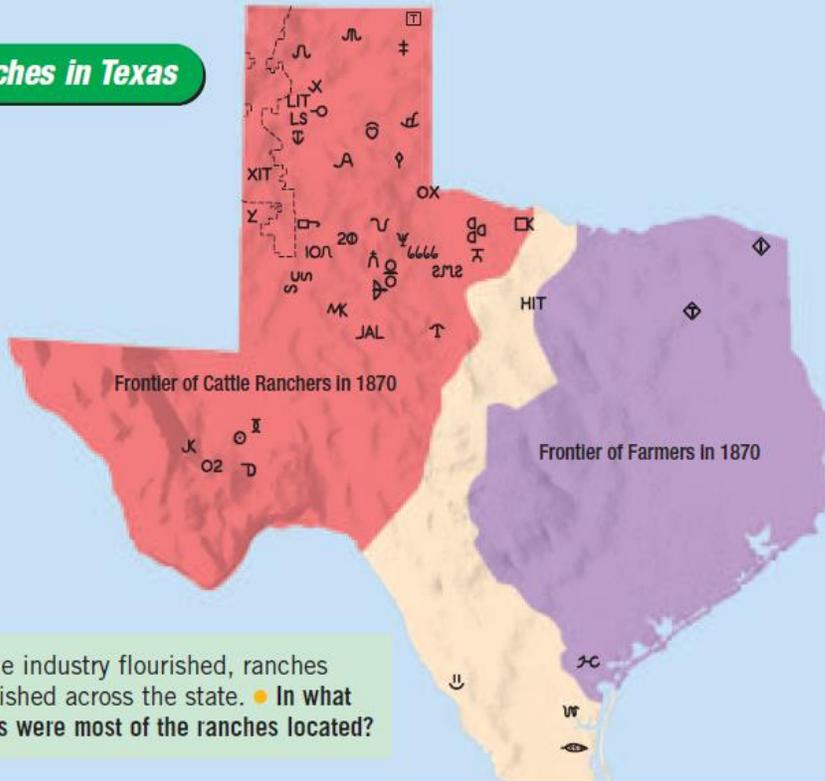
Founded by James K. Hitch (1855-1921) on Coldwater Creek in what was called "No Man's Land," now the Oklahoma Panhandle. At its peak, the ranch encompassed 80,000 acres in three states. Still owned by the Hitch family, today it is one of the most diversified ranches in the Southwest, and has a cattle feeding capacity of 160,000 head.

13. Four Sixes Ranch, 1900 (pictured below)

Established by Samuel Burk Burnett (1849-1922) and at one time included 450,000 acres in four separate divisions. In addition to fine cattle, the ranch became famous for its quarter horses.



Cattle Ranches in Texas



⚓ Anchor	LS LS
🏹 Bow and Arrow	✕ LX
☒ Box K	Ⓜ Magnolia
☒ Box T	♄ Matador
⚡⚡⚡⚡ Burkburnett	02 0 2
⚓ Callaghan	⊙ O Bar O
⊙ Carhart	Ⓜ O'Connor
⊙ Circle Dot	OX OX
∑ Clark	Ⓜ Pitchfork
JAL Cowden	♄ Pot Hook
⬠ Diamond One	Ⓜ Quilen Sabe
⬠ Diamond T	♄ Rocking Chair
Ⓜ Diamond Tall	Ⓜ Seven D
⊖ Frying Pan	♄ Slaughter
Ⓜ Goodnight	☐ Spade
Ⓜ Hash Knife	Ⓜ Spur
HIT Hitson	Ⓜ Swenson
IOA IOA	Ⓜ T Fork
Ⓜ Kokernot	♄ Turkey Foot
Ⓜ King	20 Two Buckle
Ⓜ Laureles	Ⓜ U Lazy S
Ⓜ Lazy Rail H	Ⓜ Waggoner
LIT Littlefield	XIT XIT

▲ As the cattle industry flourished, ranches were established across the state. ● In what part of Texas were most of the ranches located?

ACTIVITY 2.

Which ranch would you have liked to work in and why?

Resources

Texas Historical Association
The Portal of Texas

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Please email us at cattleraisersmuseum@gmail.com and let us know the following:

- * Did you find this online resource helpful?
- * Would you recommend this online resource to someone else?
- * Would you download additional resources from the Cattle Raisers Museum?
- * What other topics would you like us to explore?