Texas Longhorn Cattle - Cowboys - Gamblers & Soiled Doves. Those are the ingredients for unparalleled history on the open prairies of Kansas! In 1867, the Texas Cowboy brought his wild, untamed cattle to the railroad depot of Kansas and rode headlong into the chronicles of the Old West. Many were the towns that witnessed the coming of the cattle, but only SIX would become Legend. On those streets, the Longhorn plodded to his destiny and so did each man, woman, and child. Villains and heroes in six-gun duels, shotgun stand-offs, and vigilante justice all played out their parts in the Kansas Cattle Towns. By 1886 the trail herds were gone, but the stories lived on. You can walk those same streets of fame. Search for the haunts of Bear River Tom Smith, Wild Bill Hickok, John Wesley Hardin, Ben Thompson, Henry Brown, Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and a thousand more who made up the fabric of the turbulent Kansas Cattle Towns.

Cattle Towns Schedule of Events

January Abilene - Statehood Ball

February Wichita - Equilest of Kansas

April Ellsworth - Western Riders Ranch Rodeo, Ranch Horse Competition

May Abilene - Hickok Days
Caldwell - Chisholm Trail Festival
Dodge City - Little Britches Rodeo

July Dodge City - Dodge City Days
Wichita - American Indian Festival
Abilene - National Day of the Cowboy Celebration

August Dodge City - PRCA Round-Up Rodeo
Mid-Kansas Indian Wars Rendezvous
Ellsworth - Cowtown Festival, El-Kan Western Riders Rodeo
Abilene - Wild Bill Hickok Rodeo

September Dodge City - Cowhands & Corrientes Ranch Rodeo Finals
Dodge City - Kansas Cowboy Hall of Fame Induction

October Abilene - Chisholm Trail Day Festival

December Abilene - Christmas in the Cabin

Kansas Cattle Towns' Celebration - visit our website for dates and location

Kansas Cattle Towns Coalition

114 1/2 N. DOUGLAS • ELLSWORTH, KS 67439
www.kansascattletowns.org

Kansas Cattle Towns

THE RAIL HEADS OF THE GREAT TEXAS CATTLE TRAILS

kansascattletowns.org

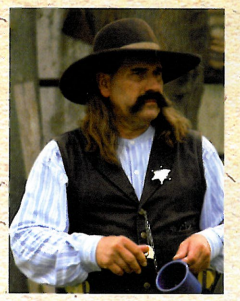
BoomTowns

In the spring of 1867, Abilene, Kansas was a sleepy little hamlet along a creek called Mud. Then a man named Joseph McCoy brought the promise of bringing Texas cattlemen and Illinois cattle buyers together on the streets of Abilene. Within a few short months, the promise was fulfilled and by the following year the boom was on. Gamblers, adventurers, women of easy virtue, and businessmen supplying every need converged on "The City of the Plains" and the once sleepy hamlet was soon a more accurate reflection of its name. Saloons and dance halls offered recreation that lasted till dawn. Bands of Cowboys and border ruffians paraded through the streets day and night. The festive sensation only faded as fall turned to winter and by late spring the cattle would return and it would all begin again.

Each Cattletown, in turn, reproduced Abilene's experience. Frontier excesses brought drama more exciting than modern movies have ever replicated. If the West was Wild, its first lessons were taught in the Kansas Cattletowns! Return with us to the Boom Days of Abilene, Ellsworth, Newton, Wichita, Caldwell, and Dodge City.

A Living Experience

To The American Cowboy



ABILENE — Joseph McCoy's idea was a new one. Bring the cattlemen and the buyers together out on the plains. Abilene soon became the center for the Texas cattle market and one of the West's most notorious "wild & woolly" towns. ■ There was no end to the celebration as Cowboys took over the town shooting and yelling with wild abandon. It was a Cowboy's holiday until Marshal Tom Smith tamed the town with his bare fists! ■ Wild Bill Hickok walked these streets and the quickness of his gun is still talked about today. At the Dickinson County Heritage Center his gun is on display. In Abilene you'll face the past that WAS the wellspring of the American cattle industry and the Cowboys of legend and reality. ■ A visit to Abilene is truly "A Celebration of History, Heroes and Hospitality!" 800-569-5915 or www.abilenekansas.org

The Great Texas Cattle Trails

ELLSWORTH — ...the name is enough to conjure up images of epic cattle drives, saloon-filled streets, and Cowboys "hoorahing" the town on mustangs snortin' fire! ■ To the Cowboys, Ellsworth was a Mecca. Money, women and drink flowed with abandon, while in the shadows, Texas cattle were making their way to the dinner plates of the North. ■ One Texan recalled, "We went from the mouth of the Nueces River to Ellsworth, Kansas, without going through a gate."... Today surrounding grasslands offer up the kind of vistas that will convince anyone that this truly IS the Old West. ■ Slow down and enjoy life in Ellsworth. Ranching and farming are still the mainstay of the community. No flash nor glitter here, just good folks and good times. Enjoy shopping in a true old west town. It's the genuine article at the "end of the trail" in Ellsworth, Kansas. 785-472-4071 or www.goellsworth.com

NEWTON — The famous Chisholm Trail gave us the reputation, "Bloody Newton, the wickedest town in the West". The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway established a railhead for Texas cattle at Newton in 1872. Gunslingers, gamblers, "soiled doves," Cowboys, railroad men; Denizens of every kind roamed the streets. ■ When the Cowboys moved west, homesteaders turned the surrounding prairie into "The Breadbasket of the World." The area boasts one of the largest Mennonite populations in the country. Visitors will find warmhearted, courteous, and friendly people in Newton, well-known for their graciousness and good cooking. ■ Western hospitality and the rugged pioneer spirit live on in our festivals, attractions, and historical sites. At Trails Park, one can still see the swales created from trailing over a million Texas Longhorn cattle and tons of freight. 800-899-0455 or www.infoenewtonks.com

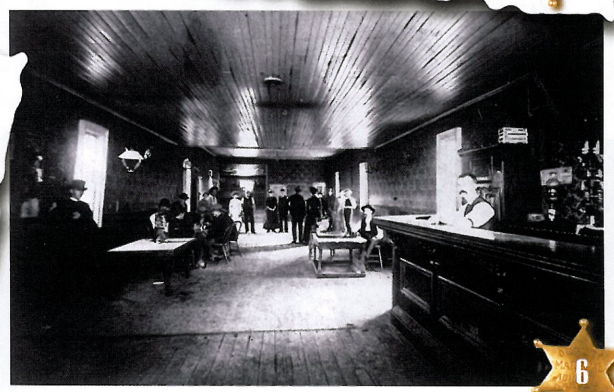
WICHITA — Near the end of the Civil War, Jesse Chisholm established a trading post at the confluence of the Arkansas and Little Arkansas Rivers. His trading trail into Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) became known as Chisholm's Trail. Texans used the route to walk the wild Texas Longhorns to the Kansas railheads. ■ Wichita was founded along the trail and near Chisholm's trading post in 1868. In 1873, the railroad reached Wichita, making it the newest railhead for the Texans. Over the next several years, Wild West legends such as Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson walked Wichita's streets. ■ Today, the Old Cowtown Museum is an authentic, 17-acre, open-air living history museum, which recreates city life in Wichita and Sedgwick County from 1865 to 1880. ■ Call 800-288-9424 or visit our website at www.gowichita.com

CALDWELL — Arriving at Caldwell, the Cowboys knew they were out of Indian Territory and into Kansas. The Cowboys soon dubbed Caldwell, the "Border Queen." ■ During its wild days, Caldwell went through 16 marshals in 6 years! Historical markers in downtown Caldwell provide an unusually complete view of the town's colorful past. Stop by the visitors plaza at Main & 1st for a free map and tour guide. ■ Located at a scenic turn-out just off US-81 south of Caldwell, our Ghost Rider silhouettes are known far and wide. Ghostly life-sized silhouettes of a trail drive give one a feeling of the vast herds that walked the Chisholm Trail. ■ Caldwell's friendly people will have you convinced that you have found a new home. "The Kansas cattletown on the border" 620-845-2145 or www.caldwellkansas.com

DODGE CITY — is the pure definition of the West. Situated on the Santa Fe Trail, Fort Dodge was established in 1865 to protect freight wagons on the way to and from Santa Fe. With the arrival of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway in 1872, Dodge City was born on the open prairie west of the Fort. In its early days, it was known as "Buffalo City" as hundreds of thousands of buffalo hides were shipped by rail. ■ Soon, Texas long horn cattle were filling the streets, and with them came the cowboys. So much so, that Dodge City became known as the "Cowboy Capital of the World." Law and order also rode into town in the form of Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and Bill Tilghman. ■ Relive the legend at Boot Hill Museum, where the actual artifacts from Dodge City's early days are carefully reconstructed on Front Street. Boot Hill is open all year with gunfight reenactments, Country-Style Dinners, and Long Branch Variety Shows occurring daily in the summer. 620-227-8188 or www.boothill.org

It's time to crawl out of that bedroll, pardner, and hit the trail fer town. That long dusty trail has an hombre yearnin' for the bright lights an' friendly streets at the "end of the trail"! There's a Cattle Town fer every preference! Why not try 'em all! Experience the Cowboy legends of Abilene, Ellsworth, Newton, Wichita, Caldwell, and Dodge City, Kansas! For a genuine encounter with the West, visit our website at www.kansascattletowns.org

End Of The Trail



1. Drovers Cottage looms over the "City of the Plains" - Abilene, Kansas

2. Ellsworth's Drovers Cottage - the Cattlemen's Headquarters

3. Newton as a lawless, untamed settlement in 1872

4. Wichita in 1872 on the eve of becoming a Kansas railhead

5. Wild and Wicked Caldwell - "The Border Queen"

6. Ham Bell's Varieties - A brazen Dodge City dance hall. (Where one could indulge in the Giddy dance)