



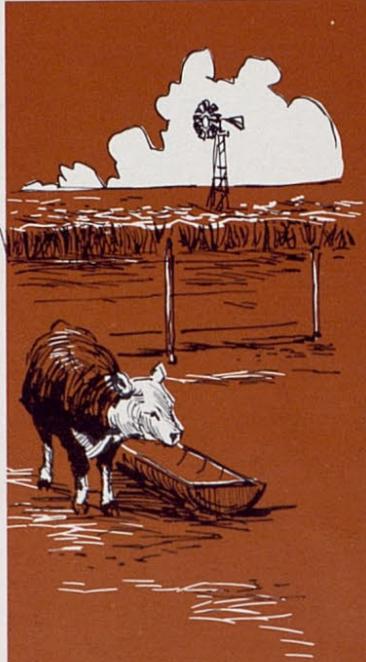
Summer 1958





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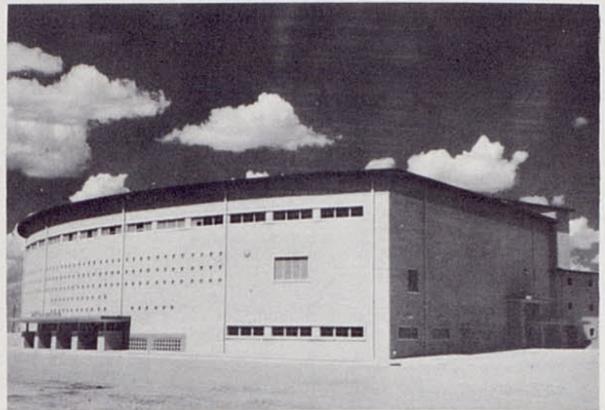
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of the world



Seating 3,500 persons, Dodge City's mammoth municipal auditorium is the second largest in Kansas. Various community functions are held here throughout the year.



BRANCHING out into the fringes of this southwest quarter of Kansas, giant grain elevators soar skyward. Not only is this the center of the largest hard-winter-wheat producing area in the world, it is also the world's largest feeder-stock market. Corrals and sales buildings crowd the lower level of the skyline in Dodge City's Southeast side.

This and the clatter of the Santa Fe and Rock Island freights helps to retain some of the flavor of old Dodge. Pressures of a modern, expanding economy have changed the complexion somewhat but Dodge, more than other towns in the west, is successfully retaining its western flavor.

First established as headquarters for buffalo hunters, Dodge was the center of migratory seekers of excitement, and fun—a temporary home for killers (some became permanent with a boot-hill burial), saddle-sore trail drivers, patriot soldiers of the post Civil War era and Indian fighters. Finally as the buffalo herds disappeared with the wholesale slaughter during the early 70's, Dodge City gradually took on the status of a normal community of farmers-ranchers. And on a grand scale, the town is just that today.

While Dodge boomed in the early days from the business activity provided by buffalo hunters, skinners, freighters, cowboys and killers—it prided itself with its courtesy to strangers. Strangers milled into Dodge by the hundreds daily for one reason or another. Publicity helped because neighboring towns envied the attraction Dodge had for the whole lot, who usually had money in their pockets. Money was generally no object though some salaried cowboys were not so numerous half-way between pay days and it helped to bring periods of relative quiet a few nights each month. Even these nights, however, didn't prevent a killing or two. The words of state historian Jim Steele probably best describe the status quo during those early Dodge days: he calls "that day lost whose



Panoramic view of the McKinley-Winter Livestock Commission Company yards, sales auditorium and parking area. Dodge City continues to rank as one of the country's leading cattle feeding and shipping centers. The feed yards of this company alone can handle 11,000 head of cattle. Sale ring (inset) is air conditioned and seats 538 persons.

low descending sun saw no man killed or other mischief done."

But most of the wild doings occurred south of the tracks. On the other side of the tracks visitors were known to remark about the surprising order and quiet that existed. Though Dodge did have its bountiful share of wild and wooly antics nightly, the movies and TV today have portrayed only one side of a many-sided story.

It's true that with every courageous visitor who had exceptional talent with a gun, Dodge citizens saw a candidate for a peace officer.

In spite of it all, Dodge, a representative western town, can take a great share of glory for the development of the west. Trail herds increased, farmers and ranchers started fencing land and a stable population gradually took shape, while the heavy traffic in the move westward continued.

A mecca today for a different group of migrants — tourists — Dodge remains the "Cowboy Capital" of the world. Such attractions as Boot Hill Fiesta, the Great Southwest Free Fair, Boot Hill Museum and Beeson Museum lure thousands of visitors annually.

Markers in Dodge will keep the town and the annual throng of visitors forever reminded of the heritage of the west. One marker built around the

heads of yoked oxen reads, "MY TRAILS have become YOUR HIGHWAYS." Another marker below a typical Dodge cowboy of the 70's reads, "ON THE ASHES OF MY CAMPFIRE THIS CITY WAS BUILT."

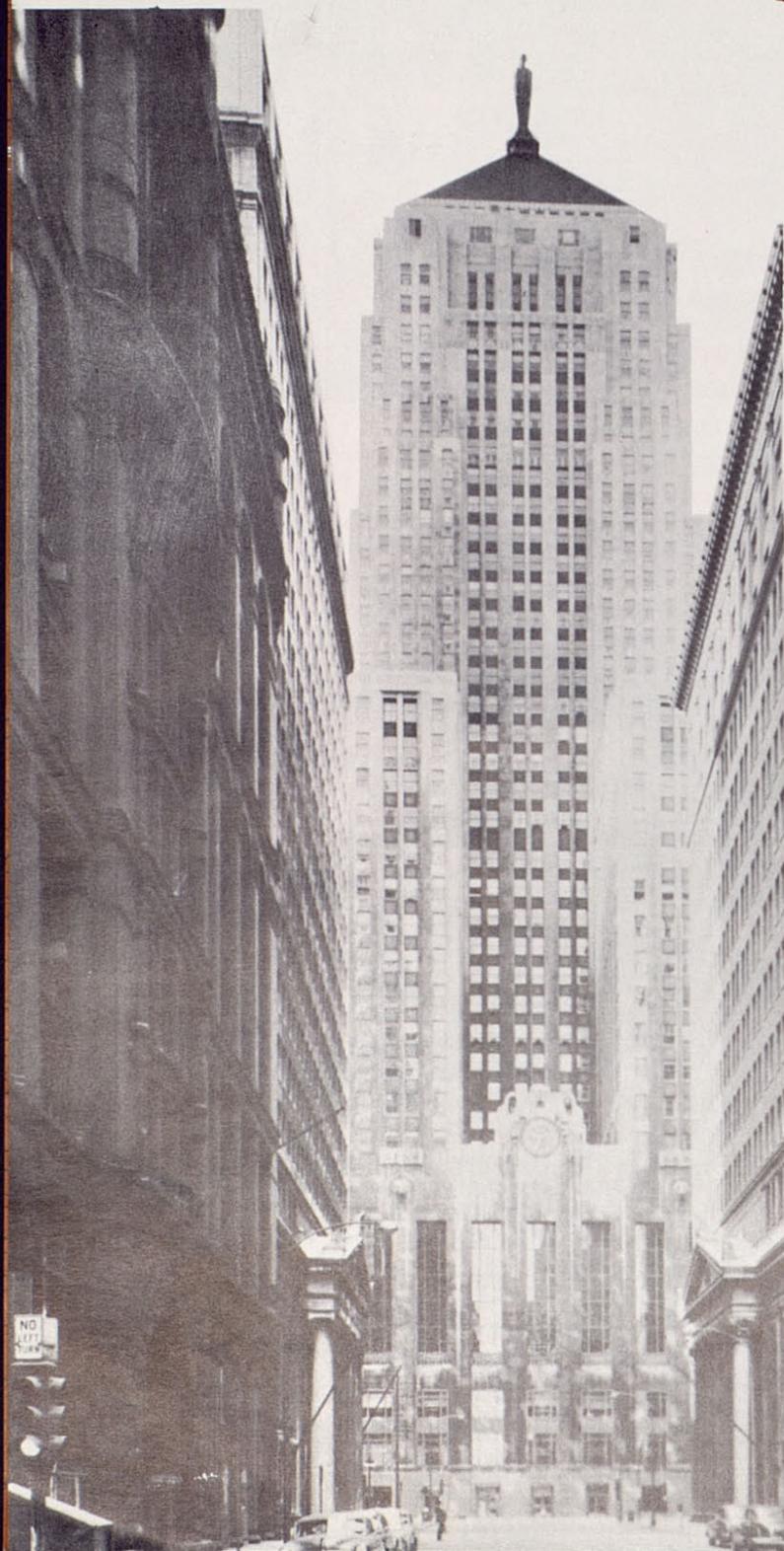
Though the publicity of Dodge today is overshadowed by more modern and stable conditions, even today it might be considered as the threshold to the last great frontier. Only the elderly old-timers can remember the legend pointed out in Holiday Magazine that typifies the reputation Dodge once had. As legend has it, a disgruntled cowboy boarding a train was asked, "Where are you going?" "To hell, I reckon." "All right," said the conductor, "Give me a dollar and get off at Dodge."

Today, Dodge is a perfectly normal city in all respects except that it is busier than most. Wheat production ranks first with ranching and livestock production a close second in Dodge's economic stature. Wheat farmers are anticipating a bumper crop this year and the cattle business continues to boom . . . more than 13,000 head were sold for more than \$2 million during one week in April. This is truly the center of America's breadbasket and it's famous for "steak" too! The cattle business in Dodge has prompted the development of a host

See Page 15, COWBOY CAPITAL

a contrast in marketing

is reflected here. Wheat is piled on the ground (right) during the early days of the market place in Chicago. The Board of Trade (below) and the traders (below right) complete the contrast. Today, 90 per cent of the world's "futures" trading is carried on in Chicago.



WHEAT, cattle and oil . . . what a combination!

A dramatic story of the west and the southwest is synonymous with these three products and their development in this country. Except to touch on the stories of cattle and oil, wheat, because of its timeliness during the coming harvest season, deserves the bulk of the space in this story.

A few years before Wyatt Earp began to tame the wildest town on the western frontier, other developments in young America were helping to lay the groundwork for a fantastic state and country . . . and a heaping breadbasket.

Before the quick-triggered Earp was appointed marshal of Dodge City in 1876, this western town and military outpost had already become a major shipping point for trail herds. Buffalos by this time had been thinned almost to extinction and many buffalo hunters stayed on at Dodge and made the transition to the cattle business.

Expanded rail facilities prompted the beginning of the Chisholm Trail and long-horned cattle were driven across the vast prairies from Texas to Abilene for shipment east. Trails stretched westward bringing such towns as Ellsworth and Newton, Hays, Wichita, Caldwell and Dodge City into the limelight as wild and wooly cow towns of western Kansas.

Just two years before Kansas was admitted to the Union in 1861, Edwin Drake drilled the first successful oil well in Pennsylvania in 1859. And



*Modern marketing and transporting
of wheat is quite a system and this
development for all means . . .*

A Heaping Breadbasket

ten years before the first oil well was drilled the world's greatest market center was established in 1848 — the Board of Trade in Chicago.

Following these developments and the Civil War and finally the taming of the west, Kansas was destined to become the nation's wheat center, the fourth ranking cattle state and finally one of the leading producers of oil and gas. Wheat, cattle and oil — in 1958 a bountiful supply of all can be found spreading in any direction from the historically famous town of Dodge.

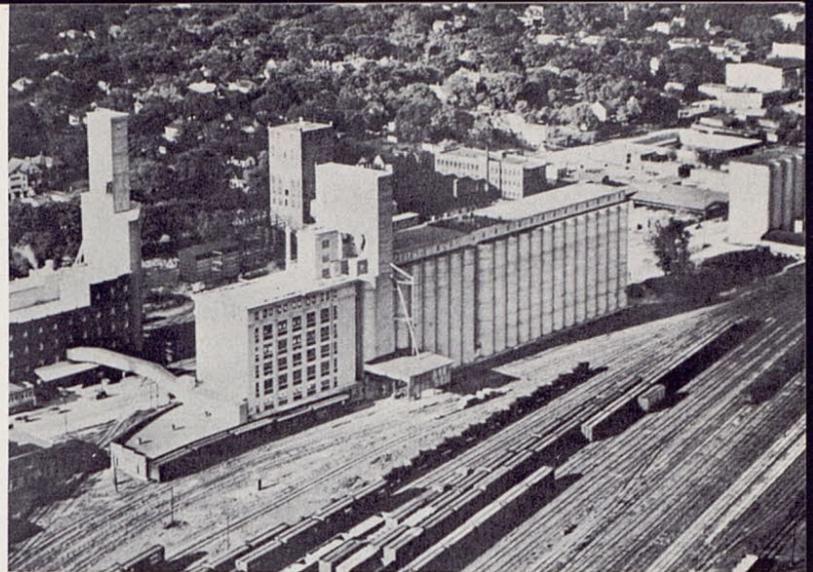
While cattle held the spotlight during the early development of Dodge City and the entire state during its formidable years, Kansas didn't earn the title of the wheat state until years later. And oil production did not play any important part in the state's economy until relatively recent years.

The first hard winter wheat seed arrived in Kansas in 1874. It was a Russian immigrant who brought the seed to Kansas.

Chicago's Board of Trade was well established providing the world's greatest central market place and when the extensive use of petroleum power took shape, the fertile farmlands of the midwest were opened to the world. The key to the nation's granary was turned and the door to America's breadbasket opened.

Worldwide, there are still people who are experiencing hunger and fear of famine.

Yet as we sing our song of plenty, there is a forgotten refrain. We know well the ballad of pro-



duction; of the combine that has replaced the scythe, the tractor that has outmoded the horse, of new strains that increase the yields. But had not the development of petroleum power and the best marketing system yet known to man evolved from our ingenious efforts, our hard work and the gracious hand of providence, then the task of putting bread on American tables would indeed be our most serious problem today — dwarfing into oblivion the problems of supply and demand, low prices and governmental controls.

One American farmer can fill the breadbasket of 21 persons today. The same number of farmers today are heaping the baskets of 170 million Americans as were filling the baskets (less full) for only 40 million in 1870.

The story of the competitive market in which the American farmer has operated helps to explain our heaping breadbasket:

By the middle of the year in 1848 the first ocean-going steamship sailed into port following the opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. A stockyard was established and an 80,000 bushel grain elevator was completed. And the first grain came into Chicago by rail.

Opening of the Great Lakes created a great demand for grain in the East. Farmers received better prices by shipping to Chicago because of this demand. Plank roads skirted the countryside helping producers bring their wagons of grain over the prairie mud.



a contrast in transportation

is reflected in the sketch (left) and the picture (above). Plank roads helped the ox-drawn wagons move across the prairie mud. Today, wheat is transported in millions-of-bushels lots by rail, water and overland on modern asphalt and concrete roads.

Once the farmer reached Chicago, the crossroads of supply and demand, it was still necessary to haul his grain from store to elevator to shipping point until a buyer could be found.

Imagine the confusion! Wagons and oxcarts, barges, canal boats and the new railroad brought the prairie town more grain than any previous market had received! Vessels crowded the harbor to take grain East for milling, processing or export.

Since there were no standard weights per bushel, it fostered shady practices in measuring. Standard grades had not been established, so bitter disputes flared between buyer and seller. Storage facilities were inadequate. The only contracts were receipts from warehouses for grain of dubious quantity and quality. Price fluctuations were violent, for either too much grain was received for the storage and shipping facilities, dropping prices drastically for latecomers, or deliveries were too small and prices skyrocketed so ships would not be kept in the harbor.

Prices for consumer goods — bread, flour, meal — rose and fell with the tide of raw materials.

The Board of Trade was born and fathered by 82 Chicago merchants. Although early records were lost in the Chicago fire of 1871, it has been quite accurately established that by 1865 the Board of Trade was complete as we know it today. Grain standards accepted everywhere in the world had been established.

The old method of buying grain by measured bushels had been replaced by the weight system used today, and a weighing department inaugurated to assure accuracy and integrity.

During this same period came the most important development of all — the evolution of the futures market.

Almost immediately after the Board was established, "to arrive" contracts came into extensive use. With a central point collecting information on grain available, traders were able to systematize deliveries into Chicago. When storage facilities were full, it became common practice to buy grain

A modern combine harvesting wheat in a Kansas wheat-field. One American farmer today fills the breadbasket of 21 persons.



"to arrive" in Chicago on a set date at a price agreed upon when the contract was signed.

Gradually instead of contracting for delivery in 5, 10, 30 or 60 days, the present "futures months" were agreed upon: March, because southern hemisphere crops come to the market; May for the cleanup of old crops and because lake traffic is open; July for winter wheat; September for the spring wheat; and December, winter storage and the close of the lakes to traffic.

In 1848 when the Board of Trade began operations, 45,200 barrels of flour were shipped from Chicago; in 1884, 4,808,884 barrels were shipped.

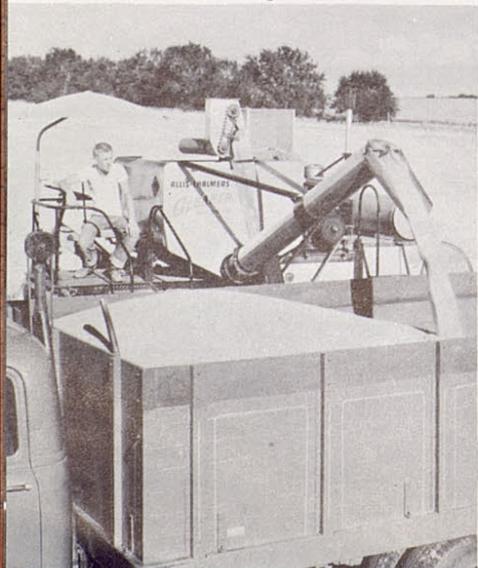
Chicago still does about 90 per cent of the world's futures trading in all commodities.

For you and me — the consumer — such a marketing system means products are available the year around, and that prices remain relatively steady.

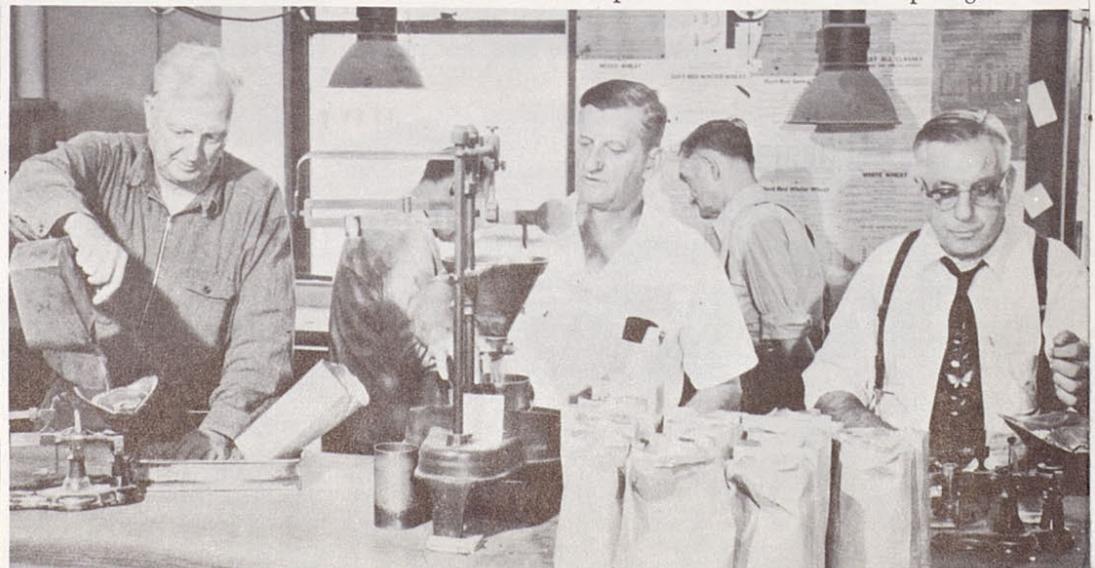
Prices are lower because the processor charges only for value added to commodities. Improvements that save even a fraction of a cent per bushel on grain are adopted, for competition is fierce. Price and service determine whether a company stays in business.

As long as agricultural markets remain free and competitive the American people can look forward to continuing developments similar to those told in this story which will make life richer and fuller for all . . . including a heaping breadbasket.

Filling the breadbasket!



Standard grades and weights at the Board of Trade protect both the farmer and the housewife from violent price fluctuations and unfair pricing.





Riders (above) from four states take their places in the Range Riders arena in Amarillo for church services on horseback during the 1958 Spring Roundup. Rev. Roy Patterson (below), Kress, Texas delivered the Sunday morning sermon.

Service in the Saddle

AN AUTO bearing four Ohio tourists pulled off U. S. Highway 66 and stopped at the south gate of the Will Rogers Range Riders arena in Amarillo one Sunday morning not long ago.

"What's going on? Is this a rodeo?" asked the driver.

"Nope. You're just in time for church services," replied an attendant. "If you have never seen church services on horseback, now is your chance. Just come on in."

The event was one of the highlights of the 1958 Spring Roundup of the American Association of Sheriffs' Posses and Riding Clubs, guests of Amarillo's Will Rogers Range Riders. Inside the flag-draped arena, more than 150 riders from four states sat in their saddles as the Rev. Mr. Roy Patterson, minister of the First Methodist Church of Kress, Texas, delivered the morning sermon.

While the event was a novel experience for the visiting Yankees, it was nothing new for the Range Riders, a doughty group of Westerners who do practically everything on horseback. Just a few weeks before — on Easter Sunday — the members held sunrise services while on horseback in their arena.

"Actually, we're just a civic club on horseback," said Judge E. H. Foster, president of the club. "We're a cross section of men in the community who are interested in horses."





Judge E. H. Foster, president of the Will Rogers Range Riders Club, and Mrs. Foster look out over the acres of rangeland at the Range Riders Club where the Spring Roundup activities were held. The club is located near the Veterans Hospital on Highway 66 west of Amarillo.

The Will Rogers Range Riders were organized in May, 1941 — “to perpetuate the memory of Will Rogers and to work with the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber, Fat Stock Show, Tri-State Fair, and to promote general interest in the Tri-State area,” Judge Foster declared.

The club now boasts 170 members, headed by Judge Foster. In addition to 50 acres of land just north of the Veterans Administration Hospital in northwest Amarillo on which their spacious club house, recreation hall, and stables are located, the club has 500 adjoining acres of grassland under lease. Judge Foster also has 842 acres of lush pastureland under lease and has made the land available to members for trail rides, etc.

Pleasure is not the only purpose of the Will Rogers Range Riders, however. The group serves as an auxiliary police force, acting in emergencies such as searching for lost parties and in any other cases in which they can assist law enforcement

agencies. They are subject to call at any time.

The group has been instrumental in producing rodeos throughout the area. In addition to their own annual rodeo (July 3, 4, 5 and 6 this year), they sponsored the Boys’ Ranch rodeo for a number of years. The members of the club built the original rodeo arena at Old Tascosa although that has since given way to a newer and larger arena.

The three-day roundup of the AASP&RC marked the first time the organization has met in Amarillo. More than 600 members registered and more than 300 rode their horses in a parade through downtown Amarillo. Old-timers recalled it as the largest number of horses ever seen in a parade there.

Such events as palmetto polo, barrel races and various horseback games entertained hundreds of guests during the three days. But probably none were more impressed than the Ohio family who attended their first horseback church service.

Pictured (left) is the clubhouse of the Will Rogers Range Riders Club during the annual Roundup. In the background stands the Veterans Hospital. Pictured (below) is another view of the Sunday morning church services on horseback at the arena.



Fun in the Panhandle Navy

WATER has always played a giant role in the drama of the West. Early settlers sought it for survival; today, their descendants seek it for diversion.

In the past three or four years, a new mania has swept over the Texas High Plains area like prairie fire. Boating has rapidly and ironically become one of the most popular pastimes in an area infamously noted for its scarcity of water. It may range from fishing from a small rowboat to skimming across the water on skis behind a powerful cabin cruiser.

Weekends find long caravans of boats behind family cars, headed for the small lakes of Eastern New Mexico, the Texas Panhandle, and Western Oklahoma. In only a few hours these boats can be

Jim Ann Farley, 1958 Queen of the Panhandle Boat and Ski Club show, following ceremonies at the Tri-state Fairgrounds.

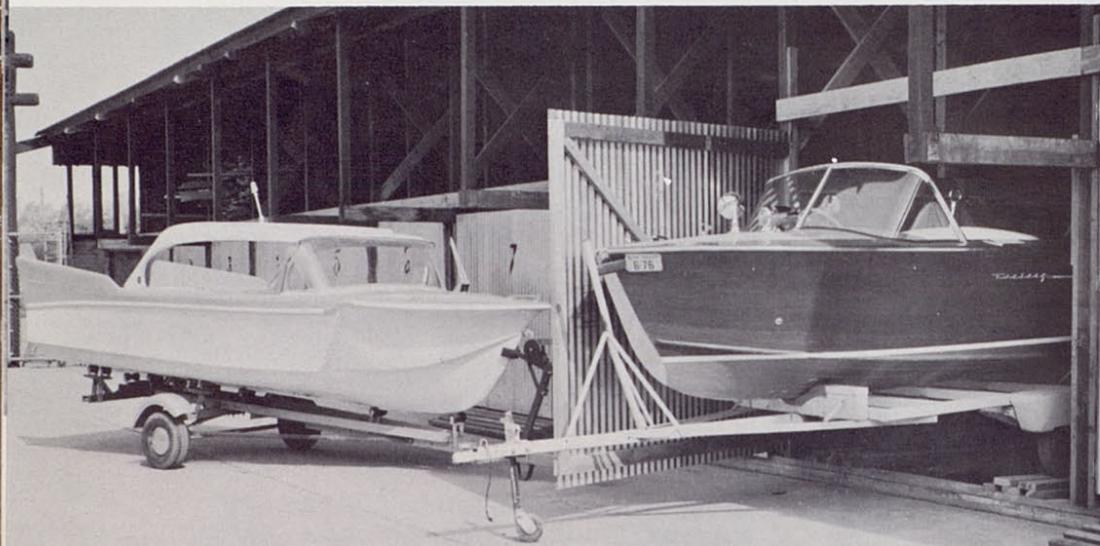


Skiing ranks high on the list as favorite water sport at Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico lakes.



Tri-state boating enthusiasts head for the water on weekends

Excellent lakes for every type of water recreation abound throughout the Tri-state area of Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma. New business ventures have grown from this avid interest in water recreation. For example, a new business in Amarillo (Burwick & Son) recently started in the quarters of what was formerly a lumber yard. Boats are stored, serviced and maintained for boat owners.



zipping across water the early settlers rode for days to find.

From out of this phenomenal growth of interest in boats has grown a relatively large industry. In addition to the original cost of the boat, countless thousands of dollars are spent annually for motors, life preservers, water skis, camping equipment, and fishing gear. Boat and motor maintenance has also been parlayed into profitable vocations.

Boating interest has also resulted in one of the Panhandle's newest clubs — the Panhandle Boat and Ski Club. It was in February of 1957 that a group of boat enthusiasts at Buffalo Lake southwest of Canyon decided to organize into a club. Today that club boasts nearly 400 members and half that many boats.

Dick Taylor, president of the organization, explains the purpose of the club is "to promote and further interest in outdoor recreation and family participation." To that end, the club sponsored several outings last summer to nearby lakes. One of the largest caravans was to Lugert Lake near Altus, Oklahoma, in which 40 boats were included.

Other favorite rendezvous of High Plains boating

enthusiasts are Conchas Lake near Tucumcari, N. M., and Lake Marvin and Lake McClellan in the Texas Panhandle. Others often venture further from home and visit Possum Kingdom Lake, Lake Kemp, and Lake Texhoma, all in north Texas.

National statistics show that throughout the United States, one family in every six owns a boat. It is estimated that Amarillo alone has more than 5,000 boats. From March to September of 1956, an average of three boats were sold daily in that land-locked city.

Maybe those puns about the Texas Navy aren't so far-fetched after all. How about the Panhandle Navy?

Fishing is also a top attraction for boating enthusiasts who load their gear and take off on weekends.





Ab Blocker

TRAIL BOSS

by J. Evetts Haley

At an XIT Cowboy Reunion in Dalhart, Texas.

THE one imperishable quality of the rough breed that swept across the West—light hands on reins and easy seats in saddles, jaunty hats tilted above sometimes devilish and sometimes defiant faces—was their irrepressible spirit. Prose, poetry and gifted brush have delineated their deeds but barely touched that wild spirit that somehow lifted their sins above the sordid, turned their gunsmoke into incense, and even converted their profanity into a sort of inverted prayer.

Explorers, trappers, hunters, miners and many other types moved on the same stage and lived through the same stirring times. Yet they never approached the cowboy in popular esteem or public appeal. What hidden human catalytic, what mysterious psychological factor, set the nature of the cowboy so fast and so far apart? It may have been the fact that of all free men, those who lived upon horses were the freest men of all.

For freedom is the headiest wine that ever moved a laborer to high endeavor; that ever fired the colors in an artist's brush; that ever inspired a

cowboy to tie his rope to a grizzly bear or shoot out the lights in a western town. The inescapable corollary of his limitless freedom was his reckless courage. In no historic phase of his variegated life did these facts emerge with greater force than in his life upon the trail.

The Texas Trail Drive, that vast, dynamic and significant movement of millions of cattle from the teeming ranges of Texas to stock the Great Plains and much of the Rockies, began in earnest after the War Between the States. From beyond Omaha to beyond Miles City, from San Antonio to Saskatchewan, in the short space of twenty expansive years it converted the seas of grass to the adventurous and profitable use of the freest and hence most colorful men ever to turn a frontier to settled account.

The herds on the trail ranged from a few hundred up to two, three, and sometimes in rare and unwieldy cases, more than four thousand head. They were handled by trail outfits—crews usually of ten to twelve cowboys, with a cook, horse-

wrangler and the all-important trail boss. The fortunes of the herd and the lives of his men were in the boss' hands from the time he started his drive in Texas until he delivered the cattle, perhaps a thousand to fifteen hundred miles away.

Indians, outlaws, stampedes and natural hazards, from flooded rivers to long, dry drives, were his to meet and master all along the way. Yet he was expected to keep peace and order among his men and deliver his herd intact, in improved condition, at the end of the long drive. Thus his job demanded ability in handling rugged men, in calculating the effects of wind, weather and terrain on animal nature and psychology, and a measure of physical hardihood, courage and responsibility. South Texan Ab Blocker typified the breed.

Of a large family of cowpunching boys, Abner Pickens Blocker, Jr., was born three miles south of Austin, January 30, 1856. The trail movement had been actively underway for a decade, when in 1876, he joined his brothers, John R. and Bill, on their rough Blanco County ranch in rounding up 3700 big steers. Many were outlawed cattle that

they had to rope and neck to work oxen in order to get them out of the hills and breaks. But the Blocker boys, who gave their name to the wide "Blocker loop," were in their element.

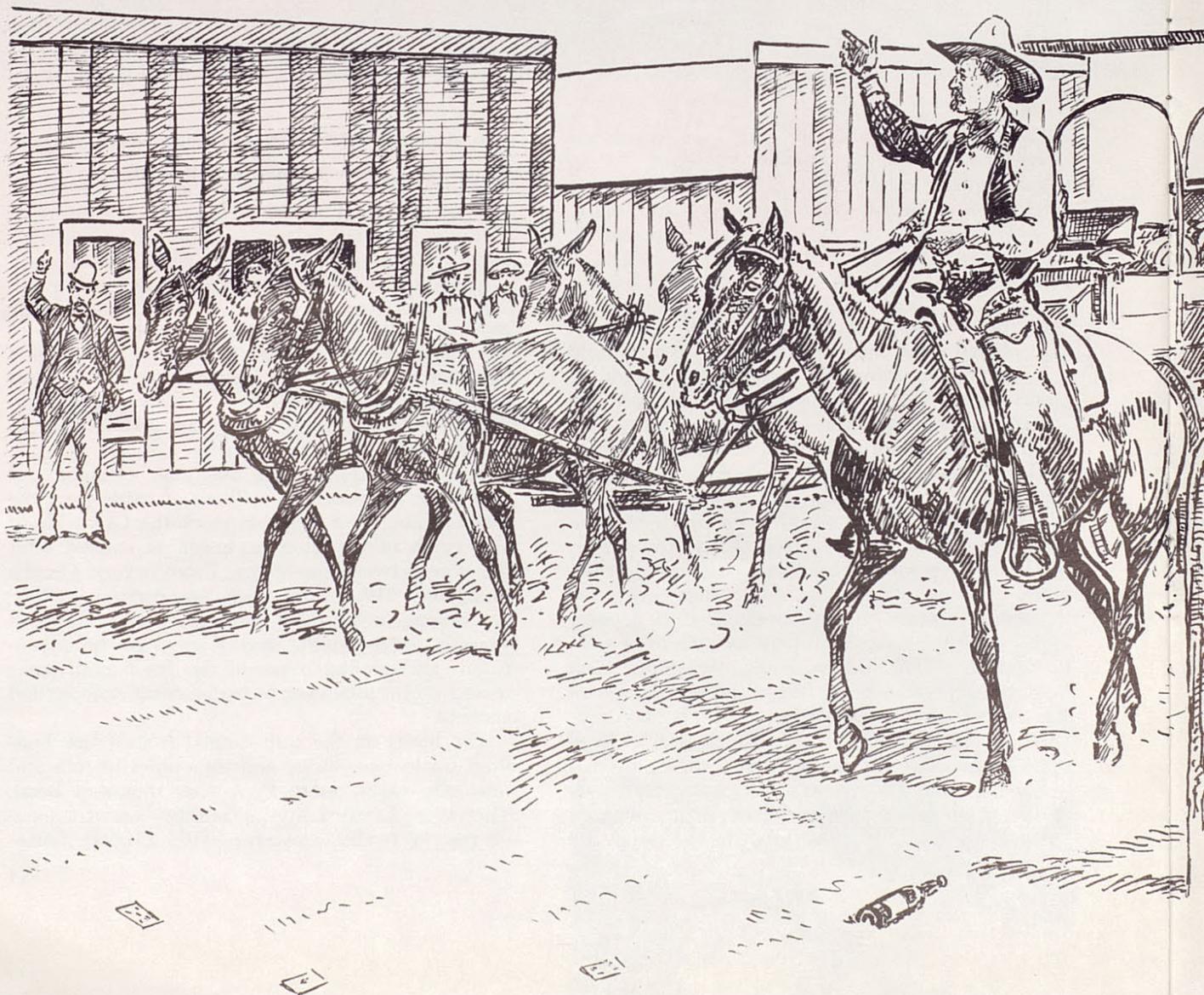
They gathered and held their herd, and in the spring of 1877 John R. Blocker, with a crew of fifteen hands, a remuda of horses, and a chuckwagon piled high with bedrolls, pointed these Longhorns north along the Texas Trail. Ab was riding in their dust.

They took the well-beaten route by Austin, Waco and Fort Worth, where they reloaded with provisions to last to Dodge City.

All across Indian Territory, and to the Arkansas, near Dodge, Ab recalled:

"We never saw a fence or a house. We never heard a dog bark or a rooster crow." They restocked their wagon at Dodge City—then the boasted "Cowboy Capital of the World," and pointed the leaders of their herd toward Ogallala, on the Platte, another important cowtown on the Texas Trail. It was a rainy season and they "had to swim every creek and river from the Colorado

Ab Blocker shuns the diversions as he drives through Trail City.



to the Platte." But the Blockers knew cattle, and after eighty-two days of twenty-four hours each with the herd, they turned it over to John Sparks at Pine Bluff, Wyoming. He pointed it across the Rockies toward Idaho, while the Blocker outfit rode into Cheyenne and took the roundabout railroad home.

Again they hit the hard, limestone hills of Blanco County at a high lope, ready ropes with big "Blocker loops" dropped conveniently over their saddle horns. Again they gathered 3,000 big scalawag steers and held them on open, winter range on the Lockhart Prairie. And again, as grass greened in the spring, Ab fell in with trail boss John Golden's outfit as it threw them on the trail. Their course toward the tall grass ranges was the same. John R. Blocker, operating heavily on the trail, caught them on the South Platte with a herd that he was driving, and which he turned over to Ab for final delivery.

Thus, at twenty-two years of age, Ab became a trail boss. In regular routine, at twelve to fifteen miles a day, he drifted his herd toward northeastern

Wyoming, for delivery on the Belle Fourche River range of those noted operators, the Swan Brothers.

He caught out night horses near the wagon, just out of Julesburg, late one evening, in the face of an approaching storm. The cook was handing out slickers to seven of his men and Ab had mounted and was loping back to the herd.

"Upon hearing a big clap of thunder," he said, "I turned in the saddle and looked around. Every man and his horse was upon the ground. I loped back and just as I got to the wagon, the seven men got up. But all their horses were dead as hell. I had one man in the bunch named King Heavington. He had roped a horse and got jerked down on his head a few days before, and had been crazy as a lunatic ever since. When he got up from that shock of lightning, he was back in his right mind." When Ab asked Frank Smith, his bucolic Irish cook, if it knocked him down, he snorted: "No, by G—! I had the advantage of the Almighty. I was lying down already."

John Golden's herd, snaking its way toward the Red Cloud Indian Agency in northwestern Nebraska, had worse luck. Lightning struck one of his cowboys in the head. The bolt passed down his back, and broke every bone in his body. It burned a hole in the seat of his saddle, passed through a kidney sore in his horse's back to kill the mount in its tracks, and melted out a row of brass tacks that held the leather to the cantle of his saddle. Despite seven dead horses at one camp site and a fresh grave at another, the Blocker herds were delivered on time.

Ab drove John R. Blocker herds upon the trail consistently. In 1882 he had 3,500 big steers pointed for Stoddard and Howard's range in northern Wyoming. As he swung down Dry Powder, he reined over to a stage stand where the old attendant was currying his work cattle, and drew up for conversation.

"Wher' yu from?" the old fellow inquired.

"Southern Texas," answered Ab.

"How long yu been on the trail?"

"Near five months," Ab added.

"Wher' yu going?"

"I'm going to cross the main Powder," Ab explained, with a copious burst of detail, "and day after tomorrow I'm going to turn 'em over on a little creek called Crazy Woman." The old man let the currycomb come to rest above a lean loin, and voiced approval:

"Well, young man, when you started, you were whittling on a damned long stick, but you've whittled her mighty near to the end."

Between long drives to the northwest, Ab took charge of 2,500 stock cattle in 1885 that became the first herd on the Capitol Syndicate, then being organized as a ranch in the Texas Panhandle. When he reached the headquarters at Buffalo Springs, the



manager, "Barbecue" Campbell, had a bunch of five inch bars on hand but was still undecided as to the brand. Ab, impatient to get on his way, looked at the bars and, on the impulse of the moment, dragged his boot-heel through the dust of the corral to suggest the XIT. Campbell seized upon the idea and Ab forefooted the first cow — of the hundreds of thousands to follow — to have the great brand seared into her sorry hide.

Ab and another puncher then rode north to Las Animas, where they sold their horses, sacked their saddles, and took the train east. At Dodge City he picked up a wire from "Brother John," telling him to grab the stage for Camp Supply, Indian Territory, where the entire Texas drive, including several herds of his own, was being held up by outlaw elements trying to charge a toll for the crossing of government lands.

When Ab got there he found that fourteen armed men were riding the fenced-off trail, and the Texas bosses were fretting at this rank inhibition on human freedom. One of these, old Bill Meadows, of Goliad, proposed to John R. Blocker that if he would only say the word, "I will take my outfit and kill every one of those so and sos tonight." But Blocker demurred in favor of legal process.

After repeated appeals to Washington, "a wire came from the Secretary of War," ordering the blockade lifted under threat of sending troops. When the trail drivers got it, they chopped down the fence for three hundred yards, and Ab Blocker, with the lead herd of 4,000 steers, led the way across No Man's Land. As they strung out across the Wolf Creek breaks, Ab shifted in his saddle and looked back:

"And as far as I could see," he said, "there was nothing but men, horses, wagons and cattle on the move."

After long days and wakeful nights he delivered the herd to the Robinson Ranch, near Deer Trail, Colorado.

"I hit my horse down the hind leg," he recalled, "loped up to the ranch, pulled off my leggin's and six-shooter, pulled off my saddle, threw it in the shade, laid down with my head on it, and said to the boys:

"I'll kill the first man that wakes me up." He slept undisturbed 'til nearly sundown," and then was ready to start back to Texas.

In 1885 the settled citizens of Kansas had grown so weary of these unruly men, horses and Long-horns from Texas, that they tightened their laws and barred their entry to the Sunflower State. The Texans threw a wide loop into their old trail to circle the southwestern corner of Kansas, and, despite their disdain for legality, continued more or less up the Kansas-Colorado line, which had been officially designated as the "National Trail."

The sporting elements moved west from Dodge to lend brief life to a new cowtown called Trail

City, and in 1886 the Blocker herds were the first to be driven through it. In spite of the decline in driving, John R. Blocker and his partners had 82,000 cattle on the trail that year.

But the advance of settlement and the use of barbed wire, all across the West, were cutting off the movement of herds. The great drive was almost over when, in 1893, John R. Blocker contracted to deliver 3,000 head of stock cattle from the South Plains of Texas to near Deadwood, South Dakota, for a cowman named Harris Franklin, "at \$2.75 a head and stand all the losses." The durable Ab reached the Square and Compass Ranch to receive them with a cutback remuda and a bad frame of mind. When he shaped up the herd, Franklin warned him "not to start until it rained."

"Mr. Franklin," the weathered driver sagely observed, "I don't know when in the hell it'll rain. It may *never* rain."

"Mr. Blocker," the owner answered with deference, "do you know that it's seventy-five miles to the first water in Yellow House Canyon?"

"I don't give a damn, Mr. Franklin, if it's a hundred and seventy-five. I'm gonna pull out in the morning."

"All right, Mr. Blocker," Franklin warned again, "if you lose the cattle your brother will have to pay for them."

This was adding insult to injury, for next to his pride in handling a herd was Ab's pride in "Brother John," and he shut Franklin off, by saying:

"He's plenty damned able to pay for them, Mr. Franklin." In the false dawn of April 22, 1893, Ab eased his herd off the bedground and pointed them for the North Star.

"On the second day I put them on the first water on the Yellow Houses," he recalled, "and I didn't lose a hoof."

And though he had eight saddle horses chill to death one night in a late cool spell, he was proudly pointing his herd to the point of delivery in the Black Hills, east of Deadwood, on the morning of the 26th of July. Just when he would have arrived had he waited until it really rained is still a matter of speculation, for, he said, "by my watch, on the entire trip, it rained fifteen minutes one time and twenty another."

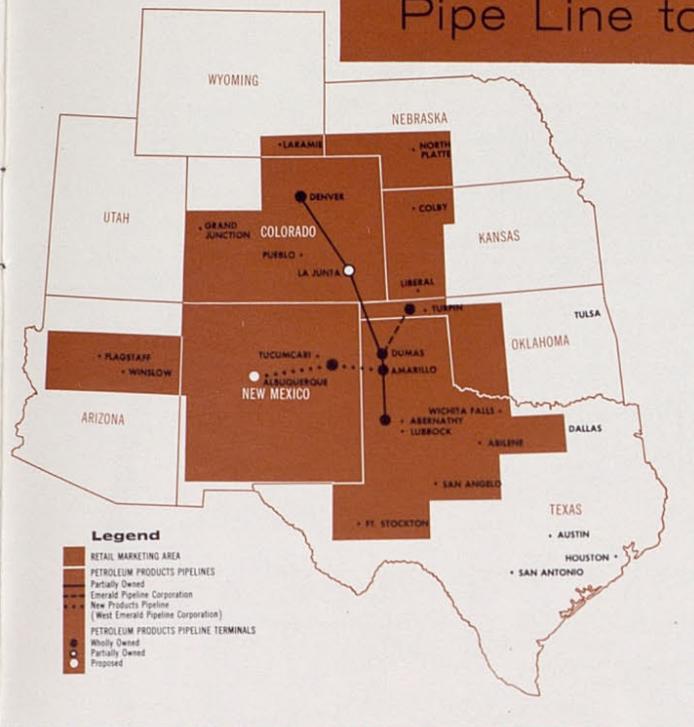
As he approached his destination "Brother John" rode out to meet him and to inquire:

"Ab, how many head are you out?" — which meant crippled, dead, strayed and stolen.

"Five or six," answered Ab, or an infinitesimal one-fourth of one percent, after all the hazards of the long trail. John R. Blocker studied the herd's condition with a cowman's eye, and then added in commendation:

"Ab, that's the best looking bunch of two-year-olds I've seen come off the trail." Restrained praise from the top, but for "Old Ab," who died without lands or cattle, that was ample compensation!

Pipe Line to Albuquerque Underway



West Emerald Pipe Line Corporation, with which Shamrock is affiliated, is building the new products pipe line from Amarillo to Albuquerque with terminal outlets in Tucumcari and Albuquerque (dotted line shows route).

COWBOY CAPITAL, Continued from Page 3

of allied businesses employing hundreds of people in Dodge.

Four feed yards in Dodge are capable of handling 11,000 head of cattle. Livestock commission companies, truck lines, fertilizer dehydrating plants add to the diversification of employment within the cattle business alone.

Oil and gas production continues to grow. As late as 1947, oil production in the 19 counties of southwest Kansas was only 500,000 barrels. Production has increased 500 per cent to 2,500,000 barrels in 1957. Gas production increased during the same period from 141 billion cubic feet to 445 billion in 1957.

Opening of the Front Street replica of old Dodge will add new interest to a lively tourist business. Employment has held steadily in Dodge. Its last economic report was called "Resurgence, Not Recession" and the title indicates the direction in which Dodge is moving.

Though the lingering recollection of two-gun marshals like Bat Masterson, Wyatt Earp and Bill Tilghman still hover over this traditionally cowboy town, Dodge residents are busying themselves with currently pressing details of building a finer city — where finer wheat and cattle are still king and oil and gas in fringe areas are adding an extra push.

Construction of a new six-inch products pipe line is underway to Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Shamrock Oil and Gas Corporation announced recently that West Emerald Pipe Line Corporation, with which it is affiliated, is building the pipe line.

The common carrier line will be 275 miles long with terminal outlets at Tucumcari and Albuquerque. The Amarillo-Tucumcari portion of the line is scheduled for completion this summer and the Tucumcari-Albuquerque portion by the fall of 1958.



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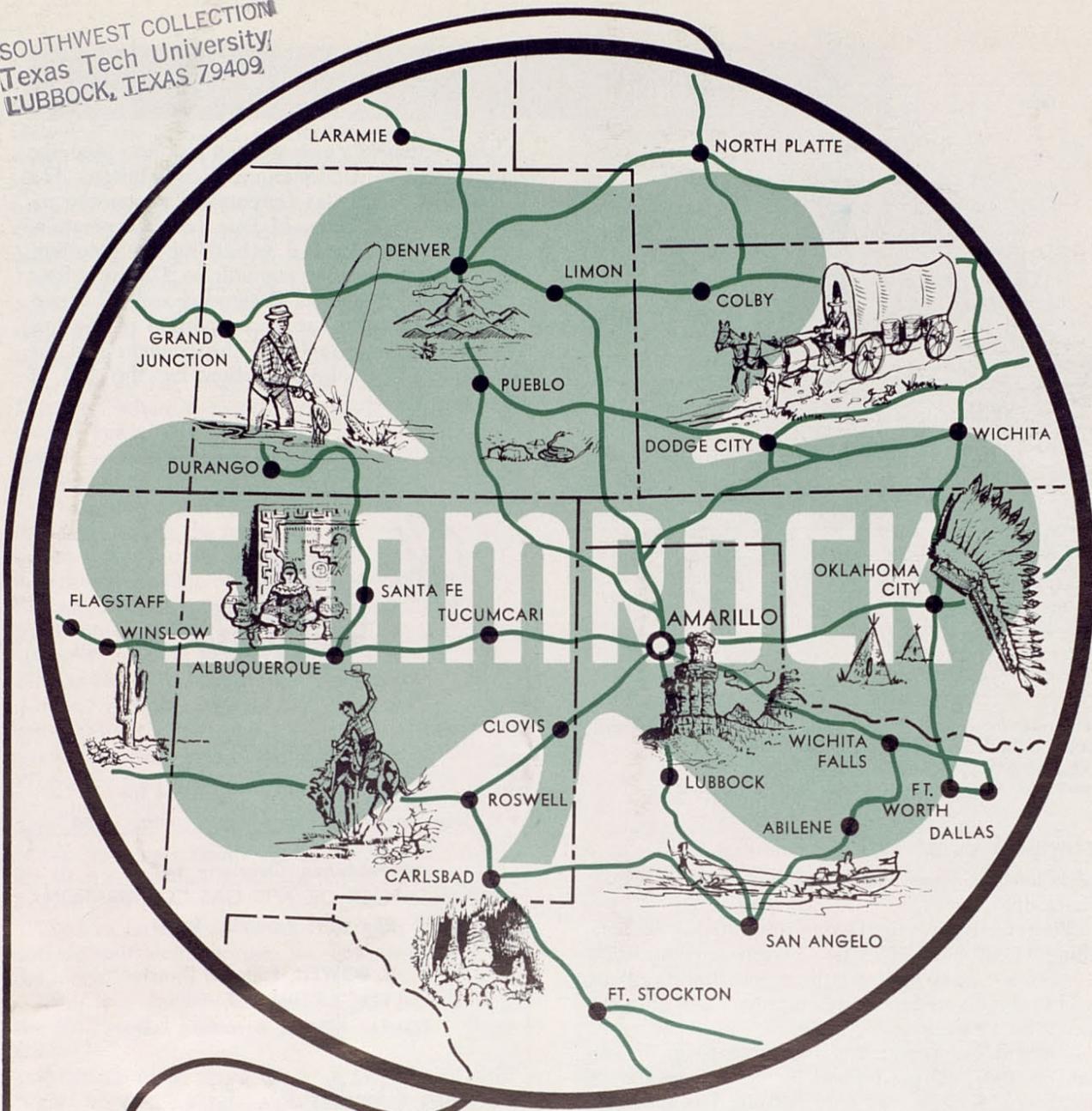
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