

The Texas Drover

The first herds of longhorns usually arrived by early June when the Kansas climate provided good grass and water for the cattle. Kansas cattle towns like Dodge City were resorts for the Texas drovers and cowboys. Their visits there might be equated to the modern vacation, and the cowboys and drovers usually let off steam when they reached them. It was only natural. After two or three months on the trail in dust or mud and with little sleep they delivered their herds of longhorns and were paid for their labor, usually in cash. Suddenly they felt free, uninhibited, and rich by cowboy standards, with anywhere from \$50 to \$90 in accumulated wages.

Before going into town, some cowboys might bathe or head straight for town, where for two bits they could- use a tub with hot water in the back of a barbershop. A shave and a haircut followed, and then the purchase of some new clothes to replace the frayed, dirty, and smelly ones worn on the trail.

The prominent saloons in Dodge City included the Alamo, Beatty and Kelley'S Alhambra, Mueller and Straeter's Old House, and the Long Branch, built in 1873 by Charles Bassett, Ford County's first sheriff, and A. J. Peacock. Nearly all the saloons in Dodge City offered gambling.

The pattern of most cowboys arriving in Dodge City was similar. After cleaning up and buying new clothes, they were likely to seek some liquid refreshment in the saloons. Many played poker and visited the ladies of the night. But it is foolish to believe that all cowboys and drovers who came up the trails from Texas did all of these things. Certainly there were some cowboys who matched this description, but most seem to have been honest men.



A Walk On Front Street



End of the Trail

About the Tour

A Walk on Front Street is an augmented reality tour at the Boot Hill Museum, depicting the life of a Cattle Drover at the end of the trail. Visitors to the museum can walk along Front Street and experience how life must have been in the cattle towns of the 1870's. There are five stops along the walk, where signs act as augmented reality targets. Each target has a different story to tell from the time the Texas Drover entered town, was paid, until they found themselves gambling in one of the many local saloons.

What You Will Need

When taking the tour you will need a smart phone and have downloaded the free DAQRI application to your mobile device. To get started on the tour, go to the Front Street board walk and find the sign "Front Street Times". Then open the DAQRI application on your smart phone or mobile device. The next step is easy, open the DAQRI App, point your phone at the sign and the story of Front Street will take you to your next stop on the tour.

First Target: Start at Front Street Times



Second Target: Tonsorial Parlour



Tonsorial Parlour

Third Target: Saratoga Saloon



Saratoga Saloon

Fourth Target: Tonsorial Parlour



General Outfitting Store

The original General Store was operated by Charles Rath, Robert Wright and A.J. Anthony in 1872. It was one of Dodge City's first businesses. Early customers were primarily buffalo hunters that brought hides to Rath General Store in exchange for cash or goods. People could also purchase items from the store with money. The store was called a "general" store because it was generalized – they sold a wide variety of goods. They sold clothing, food, school supplies, candy, kitchenware, dining ware, farm equipment and hunting supplies among other things

Early Dodge City had a law against the carrying of firearms. People coming into town would drop off their weapons at Rath General Store when they arrived and pick them up on their way out of Dodge. This was good for business because it gave people at least two opportunities to shop in the store.