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Cowboy Encyclopedia Volume 1

Some interesting terms and facts of the old West.

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Adios (ah-dee-ose'). The Spanish term for "good-by." The cowboy used it as "so long" or "see you later." Like the French "adieu," it literally means "to God."

Airtights. Any kind of canned goods, but particularly canned peaches. Canned tomatoes are considered a good thirst quencher. Sometimes the cowboy carries canned milk which he calls "Contented Cow." Even if a cow is within three feet of him he will do without milk in his coffee rather than milk a cow. The only time he stoops to this low form of life is during a "wild-cow milking contest" in a rodeo.

Angle-Iron. A triangle made of iron which rings loudly when struck. It hangs near the kitchen of the ranch house and is used to announce meals. While striking it the cook usually shouts, "Chuck! Come and get it!"

Arroyo (ar-roy'-o). A small stream or its dry bed. *Arroyo*, in Spanish, means "brook." In the Southwest many areas are cut up by arroyos, which are deep gullies in which water flows only during the wet seasons.

Auguring. A cowboy term meaning talking big. The cowboy sometimes says "the Big Augur" when he refers to the Big Boss.

Bad Lands. A term applied to broken country with deep ravines, bluffs, and hills. During the time of early French explorations the name *mauvaises terres a' traverser* (bad lands to travel over) was given to certain sections in Nebraska and North and South Dakota. Thus came the name "Bad Lands." The Bad Lands area of South Dakota is between the White River and the south fork of the Cheyenne River. This was once fairly level plain country, but streams have cut out great ravines and ridges, leaving in many places slender columns of clay which rise like giant toad-stools. The Bad Lands of North Dakota along the Missouri River were rolling plains at one time, but are now slashed by ravines whose walls of soft earth have crumbled into fantastic forms.

Bedding Ground. Also called "bed ground." This was the place along the trail where cowboys bedded their cattle for the night.

Bible Two. A term used by Texas Rangers for the list of fugitive bad men published every year by the Adjutant General's Office. It was almost as religiously read by the Rangers as Bible One, or the Holy Book. At one time it was said that the Texas Rangers had a list of 5,000 desperadoes who were wanted by the law.

Blind Post Office. A crevice in a rock or trunk of a tree where news items and letters are exchanged. Often used in early days by outlaws and cattle rustlers, but also used by cowboys.

Blotching. To erase a brand with a hot iron. This was a trick used by cattle rustlers. A large scar resulted over the original brand so that it could not be used to prove ownership.

Calaboose (kal'a-boose). The cowboy's word for jail. It comes from the Spanish *calabozo* (kal-a-boh'tho), meaning dungeon.

Cat. Cats were highly prized on ranches. The standard price for a pussy throughout the cow country was \$10 in the old days. As food usually was laid in for a year, cats were necessary as mice and rat catchers.

Chinook (chih-nook'). A warm wind that blows from the northwest. Coming in the early spring, it often brings sudden thaws and floods.

Chuck. Food. The cowboy also speaks of "eats," "chow," and "grub." Sowbelly (bacon), beef, bread, and coffee were the principal foodstuffs of the range in the old days. In the North they used more beans and dried apples. The northern bread was usually made of wheat flour, while in Texas it was made from corn meal. During a roundup a cook might carry along a jug of sour dough for making "risin' bread." Hoe-cake and flapjacks were popular.

The cowboy had to have his coffee, or "Java." In the South it was sweetened with sorghum molasses, in the North with cane sugar. Sometimes a cowboy would have to boil his coffee in the bean.

The cowboy usually put his ground coffee in cold water in the coffeepot, brought it to a boil, and then settled it with a dash of cold water. If he had no coffeepot he might make coffee in the frying pan after he had cooked his bacon. The lone cowboy, too, might cook his bread (flour and water) by rolling the dough around the end of a stick and holding it over the hot coils.

Some of the cowboy's food, like peaches and tomatoes, "grewed in cans." If he had milk, that came from a can, too. Eggs were a luxury, and whenever a cowboy went to town he ordered ham and "States' eggs"-the imported egg from the East and the only thing he would admit was better than western variety. He liked Mexican food, too, his favorites being chili con carne, hot tamales, and enchiladas.

During a roundup, if the cook was in a good humor he might whip up a "son-of-a-gun" stew, into which he put a little of everything. "Salt hoss," or corned beef, was to be had on occasion. When his meal was served the cowboy would fall to at once, or someone might say grace: "Eat your meat and save the skin; turn up your plates and let's begin."

Cowboy. One old-timer said a cowboy was "a man with guts and a horse." The cowboy of the old West was a hired hand on horseback who worked with horses and cows. But he would not admit he "worked." He said he "rode for" such and such a "brand" or "ranch." He rode "a ten dollar horse and a forty dollar saddle." But he rarely owned his horse. He furnished his rope, saddle, bridle, and clothing, but he was hired to ride other people's horses.

The cowboy was carefree, ready for anything, never took a dare, was quick to fight when insulted, and never curious about strangers. He was honest, and his word was like a gold bond. Out-smarting Easterners or Englishmen was never considered dishonest. His rope was his third hand. If asked to bring in some wood for the cook he would rope it and "snake" it up to the chuck wagon. He would not stoop to do any kind of laborer's job, nor would he even milk a gentle cow. But dare him to milk a wild one, than which there was nothing more ornery or treacherous, and would do it or die. He liked to think he could ride "anything with ha'r on." His life was a hard one, yet his sense of humor never left him.

When he went calling on the girls he dressed in "full war-paint," with spurs jangling, six-gun in his holster, in fancy vest, chaps, boots, and sombrero. He figured nothing impressed the fair ones like spurs, guns, and chaps. When he got "hog-tied: by some female he was no longer a cowboy. He had become a cowman.

Day Wrangler. A cowboy who takes care of the remuda in the daytime.

Doggone. A mild slang expression. Whenever he could think of it, this was the word cowboys used around womenfolks.

Dogie (doh'gee). An orphaned calf. In some part of the West "dogie" meant any young steer. It was usually used affectionately. The term came from the Mexican word *dogal* (doh'gahl), a short rope used to tie a calf while its mother was being milked. In the Southwest the dogie was thought of as a stunted calf "whose mammy is dead and its pappy run off with another cow."

Double-Action. A revolver in which the pulling of the trigger automatically cocks the hammer sufficiently to fire it.

Dugout. A one-room dwelling built into the ground or on a hillside. These were popular in the Southwest among the early

ranchers, and sometimes a dugout was the first ranch house. They were used, too, by line riders when they built their line camps far from the ranch headquarters. Dugouts also were built by homesteaders and nesters in the cyclone regions, such as Kansas as a refuge.

Earmark. A method of marking cattle by cutting out certain parts of the ear. In winter, when the cow's hair grew long, it was sometimes hard to see the brand, but earmarks could always be seen. This marking was done with a knife. The expression, "to earmark," comes from this practice and is used today in business when something is labeled for future use.

Eight-up. A team of eight horses, mules, or oxen.

Equalizer. Cowboy term for six-gun. It comes from the old western expression that "a Colt makes all men equal."

Fanning. A term for shooting a single-action or double-action revolver by releasing the trigger and "fanning" the hammer back with the heel of the hand. Usually the trigger and trigger mechanism were removed from the gun. An expert could fire a shot a second by this method. In fanning, the gun was held at hip level with the inner part of the forearm pressed close to the hipbone for support. "Slip shooting" is similar to fanning, only the hammer is thumbled with a wiping motion. A cowboy also "fanned" a bucking horse by striking him on the neck with his hat.

Flapjack. A kind of bread, something like a pancake but larger and made of thicker dough. It is turned over by a quick flip of the frying pan. The flapjack was a very popular item in the cowboy's fare.

Flier. A printed reward notice for a "bad man" sent out broadcast and tacked on trees and buildings.

Flunky. The driver of the bed wagon at a roundup.

Fuzztails. Sometimes called "fuzzies." These are wild or range horses.

Getting the Drop. Beating another man to the draw and covering him. When a gunfighter "got the drop" on his opponent, he did not intend to kill him, but rather to place him at his mercy and take him prisoner or prevent him from using his six-gun. In disarming a man, there were times when cowboys did as they do in the movies today when they say, "Hand me that-'ar gun, butt first." But this went out of style when one Curly Bill, in handing his gun butt first to the marshal of Tombstone, spun the gun muzzle forward by a quick flip of the wrist, and shot the peace officer. After that gunmen, when captured, were ordered to drop their guns at their feet and step back.

Git! One of the most forceful words of the old West. When a man said "Git!" or "Now you git!" it meant "Go" or the next word might be spoken by his six-gun.

Greaser. Western term for a Mexican.

Gringo (gring'go). The Mexican name for foreigners and especially for Americans across the Border. It is not, as some think, a Mexican word, but is used throughout Spanish-speaking countries to mean a "foreigner." It is from the Spanish slang word for *griego*, meaning Greek. To *hablar en gringo*, or "speak in Greek," is slang for speaking in a language that cannot be understood, as we say "It's Greek to me."

Gun. This was the term the old-time cowboy commonly used for his pistol or revolver. He rarely called a rifle or carbine a "gun," except possibly in the case of buffalo gun. A shotgun was an exception, and was often referred to as a "scatter gun." Today the term "gun" is applied correctly only to a sporting arm of smooth bore such as a shotgun.

Gunfighter. A term usually applied to men who were experts in the use of the six-gun, but who were on the side of the law. A marshal or a Ranger might be known as a “gunfighter,” but an outlaw like Billy the Kid would be a “gunman.”

Hair Trigger. A trigger on a gun or rifle adjusted for a very light pull. By filing the notch on the hammer the cowboy could make his gun a hair-trigger weapon so that it went off at a mere touch of his trigger finger.

Hand. The unit of measurement for a horse’s height. Four inches make a hand. A horse is said to be so many “hands” high, measuring at the shoulder level.

Hangout. A meeting place for rustlers and outlaws. It was also called “hide-out.” Some of the famous hangouts were the Robbers’ Roost in Utah, haunt of the “Wild Bunch”; Castle Rock in the Henry Mountains, where the “Blue Mountain Gang” holed up; the Hole in the Wall, favorite hiding place of the “Hole in the Wall Gang”; Brown’s Park County in Colorado; and No Man’s Land in the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.

Hard Case. A tough hombre or bad man.

Hurrah Towns. Term used for old cow towns where the cowboy had fun or a “hurrah time.”

Jack Rabbit. A rabbit of the western plains with very long ears, which can run very fast. When a cowboy wanted to shoot a jack rabbit he whistled, and the rabbit would stop and sit up on its haunches. These rabbits are too tough for eating.

Java. Cowboy lingo for coffee.

Jawbone. Cowboy lingo for credit. When a cowboy said he “called his jawbone,” he meant that he lived on credit.

Jerked Meat (Jerkie). A dried meat prepared by Plains Indians. The meat was either jerked off the carcass or cut in thin strips and the strips placed on horizontal poles and dried in the sun. Three days of sunny weather were sufficient to cure the meat. It was usually eaten without being cooked. Mexicans called this *charqui* (tchar’kee). When pounded and stored in bags it was known as “pemmican.”

Jerky. Slang name for stagecoach.

Knife Fighting. Fighting with the long knife was looked down upon by the cowboy. He considered it a “greaser’s way of fighting.” He put his reliance in his six-gun. Not that he was afraid of a knife, but the gun was the quicker way to settle an argument. A knife fight might last as long as half an hour with both fighters cut and slashed and bleeding. Standing foot to foot, with poncho draped over the left arm as a shield, fighters could do a lot of damage to each other. But it was astonishing how many cuts a man might receive and still keep fighting. Knife fighting was an art, much like boxing. Knife fighters tried all kinds of tricks to throw each other off guard. Sometimes a knife fighter would back up, trailing his poncho on the ground. If the other stepped on it he jerked it and threw his opponent off balance.

A cowboy is quoted as saying, “A knife is a plumb ungentlemanly weapon, and it shore leaves a mussy corpse.” The cowboy discarded the long knife after the Indian troubles were over, and rarely carried one unless hunting or in “greaser territory.” The knife, as the Latin-Americans say, “is used to open an animal or close a conversation.”

Knife Throwing. At a distance of about thirty feet the long knife, thrown by an expert, was considered the deadliest weapon of the old West. A knife-thrower could pull his knife and send it to the mark before a man could draw his six-gun.

and fire it.

The knife was held in the open palm of the hand, never by the blade. It was held in position by a slight pressure of the thumb. The arm was brought back just over the shoulder and the knife hurled by a quick forward and downward motion. If, when the arm was over the shoulder, the blade of the knife was pointing to the rear, it was thrown so that it made only a half turn in the air. If the point was forward, the knife turned one and one half times. A throw of this type was effective for fifty feet or more. To be a good knife thrower required considerable practice.

Lariat. A cowboy's rope.

Layover. When a cowboy struck a town where he expected to stay a while, he called it a "layover." When he was forced to stop for a short time because of bad weather or some other delaying condition, he called it a "lay up."

Lead Poisoning. Cowboy lingo for the "sickness" a man got from a bullet.

Line Camps. Outpost cabins or camps where cowboys live to watch over cattle and repair fences.

Line Rider. A cowboy who works out of a line camp. He has a regular territory to cover, watching over cattle and seeing to the repairs of fences. He is different from the "out rider" who is something of a freelance, or roamer.

Man-Eater. Another term for a vicious horse, or "killer." He resorts to many tricks to unseat his rider, including the "throw-back."

Mex. A cowboy term meaning "false" or "no good." This term evidently grew out of the low value of Mexican currency.

Mule. An offspring of a jackass and a mare. Old-time cowboys rarely had anything to do with mules, although they were sometimes used around the ranches and as pack animals. But still a cowboy might be forced to ride a mule when he did not have a horse. The man who drove mules were called a "skinner" or "mule skinner."

Mules sometimes become stubborn and refuse to move. They will never lead if looked directly in the eye, and to get them to go the man has to turn his back and walk away. When they balk, a small fire may then be built under them. They will usually move just far enough so the fire will be under the wagon or whatever they are hitched to. A mule will "swell up" when saddled, and when the rider mounts he will pull his belly so that the saddle will loosen and the rider finds himself "ridin' underneath."

Mule Skinner. The driver of mules. The old-time mule skinner usually was a tough character who had "private cuss words" of his own which he used in driving his charges.

Nester. A homesteader. "Nesters" were usually farmers. They received government grants of land and commonly settled near water. They would fence off watering places, which legally was their right, but this kept the range cattle out. In the beginning there were many bitter wars between cowboys and nesters. The coming of the nester was the beginning of the end of the old-time cowboy. But many a cowboy befriended nesters and their families who had come West with high hopes, and found themselves set down in the middle of the dry plains by "freighters," where they had no fuel or food.

Nicknames. Nicknames or "handles" were popular in the West. It was considered impolite to ask a stranger's full name or look too closely at the brand on an animal. How did a man get his nickname? Usually because of something he had done, or from the place where he made a reputation, or because of something about his looks or actions. For instance, "Bill" was used in many combinations as a nickname. There was Pecos Bill, Billy the Kid, Wild Bill, Buffalo Bill, Bill of the Lazy A Outfit, Flat-Nosed Bill, Long Bill, Big-Foot Bill, Texas Bill, and so on. A man might be called Alkali Ike because he was

hard like the alkali water, or might be the Sundance Kid because he came from Sundance. As a Westerner explained to a tenderfoot in warning him not to try to find out a cowboy's full name, "He most likely has given a first-class funeral to the rest of his name, and I wouldn't ask him for no resurrections."

No Man's Land. A desolate section of land once in the Indian Territory and now part of Oklahoma. It was bordered by the Cimarron River and was a refuge for cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and outlaws.

Nooning. The stopover at noontime for rest and food. The old-time cowboy would say, "We made our nooning on the banks of the Brazos."

Norther. The Texas term for blizzard.

Off Side. The right side of a horse. The left side is called the "near side." Indians mount a horse on the off side, while cowboys get aboard on the left side, or the near side.

On the Prod. Fighting mad. May be said of a man or an animal.

Ornery. Low, mean, vile. The cowboy's favorite word for something he does not like. A coyote is an "ornery critter."

Outfit. A term meaning people living together and working at the same thing. A ranch and the cowboys working on it is called an "outfit." A group of people traveling together is an "outfit." The word is used also to refer to the things a cowboy owns.

Over the Jump. A cowboy term used to mean "killed."

Pecos Justice. A "hit-or-miss" type of western justice. The name came from the decisions given by "Judge" Roy Bean of Pecos County, Texas. The large painted sign on "Judge" Bean's saloon read, "Law West of the Pecos." It was said of him that he was "teacher and barber and mayor; he was cook and old-shoe mender, sometimes preacher and bartender, and it cost two-bits to have him cut your hair." When an Austin City dude came to his place and complained about being charged nine dollars for a drink, the "justice of the peace" fined him one dollar for contempt of court, which meant he got no change from his ten-dollar bill. Once, when a dead Chinese was found with \$150 and a .45 caliber Colt on his corpse, the "Judge" fined him the \$150 "for carrying concealed weapons."

Pilgrim. A newcomer to the West. First applied to imported cattle and later to humans.

Pinwheeling. A kind of fancy gunplay. The six-gun is tossed into the air so that it turns end over end and drops into the hand in a position for action.

Pistol. The hand gun of the cowboy, commonly of .44 or .45 caliber. It might be the Colt "Peace-Maker," the Remington "Frontier," or the Smith & Wesson .44 caliber "American," but it was usually known by the name of "Colt." All pistols were called "Colts." The cowboys also gave such names to his pistol as "six-gun," "six-shooter," "shooting iron," "talking iron," "blue lightning," "flame thrower," "lead pusher," and "hog-leg." Despite the fact that it was a six-shooter, it was rarely loaded with more than five cartridges, the hammer of the gun resting over the empty chamber. Though the Remington and the Smith & Wesson were fairly popular, the cowboy's gun was more often the Colt .44 or .45 caliber, which weighed two and one-quarter pounds, was a single-action, and had an eight-inch barrel. The cowboy preferred the single-action to the double-action as he liked simplicity, and he figured such a gun was less likely to get out of order. Also, while the double-action pistol might prove faster on the first shot, the cowboy could empty his gun faster with

a single-action, especially when fanning. Still, fanning was possible with both the single-action and the double-action. The cowboy's gun had no shiny, nickle-plated parts, as he wanted nothing which would reflect the sun.

The six-gun served many purposes. The old-time cowboy could light a fire by taking some powder from a cartridge and shooting at it, just so the edge of the flame from the muzzle ignited the loose powder. He could open a can of tomatoes by shooting along the top.

The cowboy never "slapped leather," or let his hand come near his gun butt unless he intended drawing the gun and using it. There was no such thing as "fingering his gun" while engaged in an argument. He removed the gun before sitting down to the dinner table, and when he went to a neighbor's ranch he took off his belt with holster and gun and hung it over the horn of his saddle before going inside the ranch house. But when calling on a girl, he did not remove the weapon, as he calculated such "artillery" impressed the fair sex.

After many shootings and killings in the wild cow towns of the West, the wearing of the six-gun became unpopular. Most town marshals made the cowboy check their guns at his office. As cowboys felt "plumb naked" without a gun, some would carry "hide-outs." Several of the cattlemen's associations ruled that cowboys even on the range should not wear guns unless in the vicinity of hostile Indians or cattle rustlers.

Plumb. One of the cowboy's favorite adjectives, meaning "fully," "completely." He would say "I'm plumb disgusted," "He is plumb mad," or "She is plumb beautiful."

Quile. (kwyle). To curl up as in sleep.

Quick-Draw. A term for the lightning-like withdrawal of the six-gun from the holster and getting it into action. Everything about the holster, method of wearing the gun belt, and the position of the gun butt was planned to make the quick-draw possible. The belt hung loose so that in reaching down for the gun butt the cowboy's arm was slightly curved. He found this correct position himself by practice. There was no flap on the holster, nothing which would be in the way of the gun. The quick-draw was all-important in gunfighting, where a split second meant life or death. While riding, the gun was commonly hung from the left side, butt forward, for the cross draw. If two guns were worn, one on each side, the gunfighter crossed his arms in the cross-arm draw.

Gunfighters invented many ways to get their guns out more quickly. There was a special vest, with pockets as holsters; unholstered guns were hung from swivels on the belt, and others in open-toed swivel holsters. "Hide-outs" were common. A gunfighter might wear one gun in plain view but when he went into action it was the hide-out which flashed from beneath his vest or from the end of his sleeve. Cowboys practiced the quick-draw and aiming in their spare moments. This was called "dry shooting."

Railbird. A cowboy who sits on the top of a rail of a corral fence as an onlooker.

Rawhides. A term applied by northern cowboys to Texans because of their habit of using rawhide to repair everything from broken bridles to wagon tongues.

Rawhiding. Joshing, or as we say today, "kidding." Sometimes rawhiding meant to torment, or abuse, or as the cowboy said, "to ride." Rawhiding might also mean whipping.

Ringy. A term meaning mad or angry. The cowboy would say, "He's plumb ringy."

Roughneck. Term for dude-ranch employees such as cowboys, wranglers, cooks, packers, guides, irrigation and chore boys. They are sometimes called "savages."

Sagebrush. A shrubby plant found on the arid, alkaline plains regions of the West. In some cases the brush is a dwarfed

shrub, and in others it grows to treelike proportions. The trunk or stem of the plant is twisted and knotty and is covered with a light gray, shreddy bark. In some places, known as “sagebrush flats,” the plant grows as high as the head of a man on horseback.

Salty Dog. A man who was considered better than anyone else in his line, whether it was shooting, roping, riding, cattle rustling, holding up trains and stagecoaches, or just “plumb orneriness.”
“Dog” was also one of the old-time cowboy’s terms for bacon. When salty it was “salty dog.”

Savvy. The cowboy’s way of pronouncing the Spanish word *sabe*, which means “you know” or “he knows.” The cowboy used it in place of “understand.” A man, too, could have “savvy,” or knowledge.

Sign. A term for something that showed a man or beast had been in a certain place. “Sign” was not a trail, but many signs could make a trail which could be followed by an expert. “Sign” might be a footprint, a broken stick, a rock moved out of place, trampled-down grass, a deserted campfire, or even the leaf of a tree found on the ground, when trees from which such a leaf came did not grow in the neighborhood. Cowboys were always on the lookout for “sign.”

Single -Action. A one-shot, single barrel firearm-rifle, pistol, or revolver. The hammer had to be pulled back with the thumb on each shot. Instead of pulling the hammer back with the ball of his thumb, as the novice does, the experienced gunfighter pulled it with the second joint of his thumb as the hand closed around the gun in drawing.

Time. The old-time cowboy’s term for his pay. He would say, “I’ll draw my time.”

Tote. A good old word meaning to carry. A cowboy usually spoke of “toting” this or that. His favorite means of toting, however, was to lasso something and drag or “snake” it along at the end of his rope.

Travois (tra-voyce’). Two long poles attached to the side of a horse, mule, or dog. The ends dragged on the ground and a basket was lashed between them. Indians used the travois to carry their baggage. Cowboys rigged up a travois when they had to carry a sick person to a town or hospital.

Tumbleweed. The Russian thistle, a large weed of the western plains which, when dry, breaks off at the root and is blown along by the wind. Some tumbleweeds are large as bushel baskets. Being round, they roll along easily. This is nature’s way of scattering the plant’s seeds.

Two-Gun Man. A man wearing two six-guns, usually hung from a buscadero belt. The two-gun man was looked on with suspicion in the old days, and was considered either a show-off or a bad man, unless he was a town marshal or law officer.

Vamoose (va-moose’). The cowboy used this word several different ways. He would say to a companion, “Vamoose,” and it would mean “Let’s go,” or “Let’s hit the trail. He would shout at someone, “Vamoose!” and it would mean “Get out!” or “Get going!” He would say a man “vamoosed out of there,” and this meant “he got out.” The word came from the Spanish *vamos*, which means “we go.”

Vaquero (vah-kay’roh). A Spanish word for cowboy, meaning the Mexican cowpuncher.

Vigilante. A member of a vigilance committee, or group of men organized in a section to protect their rights and deal with cattle thieves, outlaws, and murderers. Members of a vigilance committee would pass judgment on a man and hang him if they thought his crime was serious enough to deserve it.
The vigilance committee was a law unto itself. In many instances these committees were organized in districts where

rustlers and ban men were not being punished by such courts of law as existed at the time, through influence or bribery. Sheriffs and town marshals in some counties and towns would not even arrest known criminals, either because they were secretly aligned with them or because they feared their vengeance.

Waddie. A slang name for cowboy. The term was first used in Wyoming in the late 1880's and the early 1890's, but in a slightly different sense. A "waddy" or "waddie" was a nester, small rancher, or freelance cowboy who rustled cattle from the big herds of wealthy cattlemen. This brought on the "Rustler War" in Wyoming in 1892.

Wallow-Stone. A round pebble, about the size of a pea, which a cowboy "wallows" around in his mouth when he is thirsty. It keeps the mouth and throat moist.

Wash. Western term for a small stream.

Westerner. People who lived on the eastern side of the Sierras and Cascades. People on the western side were called "Slopers."

Wrangle. A cowboy who handles a string of extra saddle horses. The duty of the horse wrangler, sometimes called "remuda man," "nighthawk," or "cavvy man," is to guard the band of horses, see that they do not wander too far away, and produce them when the other cowboys want a change of horses. In the old days of the trail drives and roundups on the open plains, each cowboy usually had from five to nine extra mounts. He would ride one while the others were resting. The horse wrangler commonly is an ambitious young fellow who wants to be a full-fledged cowboy. He is the first man called in the morning by the cook and starts out to round up his band of horses and bring them to camp. In the cowboy's way of saying things, he "wrangles" his horses during the daytime and "herds" them at night. He "wrangles them" and does not "wrangle with them."

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