

OKLAHOMA  
TERRITORY

## TERRITORIAL TALES

Bits of  
History  
Before  
Statehood

INDIAN  
TERRITORY

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# *Cattle Era Began Without Fanfare*

Both Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory proved to be well adapted to raising livestock but, by the end of the Civil War, there were still considerable numbers of buffalo on the Southern Great Plains. The Indians were often so hostile that the establishment of the livestock industry grew slowly.

When Texans began driving their longhorns through the eastern and central parts of the territories in 1867 they had opportunities to observe the character and quality of the soil, the water supplies, the grasses and forage suitable for grazing.

As years passed, ranges of the Five Civilized Tribes were partially stocked with domestic livestock, and cattlemen began to lease large tracts of Indian Lands in Oklahoma Territory.

Fear of Indian raids on their herds caused trail drivers to keep their stock eastward of the Kiowa-Commanche and Cheyenne-Arapaho reservations. After the end of the outbreak of 1874, there was less apprehension of danger from these sources. The buffalo had disappeared from the lands along the trails and settlers moved into the unassigned lands in 1889, with other Indian openings following.

Thus, the range cattle industry was established in the territories, especially in Oklahoma Territory. Herds were driven in (mostly from Texas), ranges were occupied, ranch buildings and corrals were built, and a new era in Oklahoma history began without ceremony or announcement.