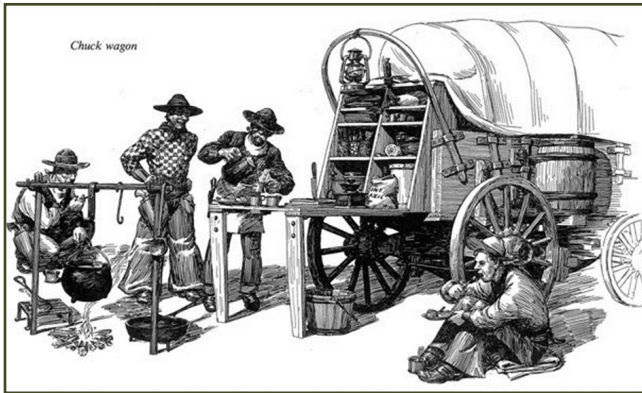


CHUCK WAGON AND PUP

The first long range cattle drives began in Texas in 1867, when cattle were moved north to the railroad in Abilene, Kansas for shipment to eastern markets. Over the next three decades 9,000,000 cattle with a value of over \$100 million were sent up the trails from Texas. Some cattle were sent to other ranches throughout the west and Canada to begin new herds.



By the 1870s, cattle drives were popular and profitable and skilled cowboys were in high demand. Owners soon realized that improving the quality of life on the trail helped them attract and retain quality cow hands.

Colonel Charles Goodnight recognized that to have content cowboys he would need to provide excellent meals and a portable kitchen on the range. In order to address this need, he obtained an Army supply wagon strong enough to make a 1,000 mile trip and designed a kitchen box in the rear of the wagon—thus, the Chuck Wagon was launched. Legend has it that the term “chuck” came from the name of Charles, or Chuck, Goodnight.



The cook was one of the highest paid employees on the cattle drive, second only to the trail boss. He had sole responsibility for organizing the chuck box, the heart of the chuck wagon.



Compact and highly functional as pantry, kitchen, and serving center, the chuck box is simple in design, with a lid that folds down into work table. The copper covered work table provides a sanitary surface by virtue of copper's chemical composition and ability to naturally kill food-borne germs. The box contains compartments for all the needed condiments, tools, utensils, and dishes. Large quantities of bulk foods traditionally were carried in the wagon.

Often a “possum belly” or fresh, untanned cowhide was tied under the wagon. As the wagon headed to the next camp the cook’s assistant walked alongside stashing bits of wood in the leather sling to have fire quickly upon arrival at the next camp.

The Pup, a small two or four wheeled open wagon, was hitched on the back to carry the cowboy’s bedrolls and any additional supplies needed for cooking.