

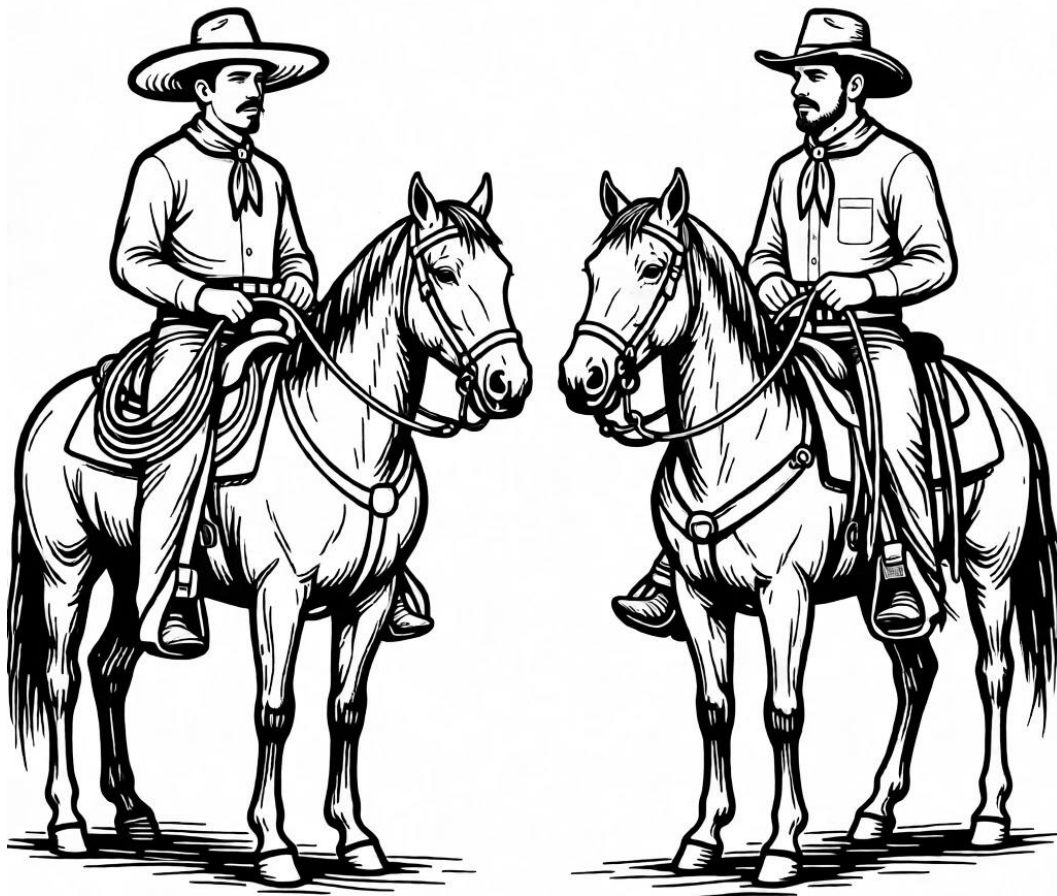
HOWDY, PARDNER!



LEGENDS



LEGENDS: THE COWBOY



ORIGINS OF THE COWBOY

Who were the first cowboys? Hundreds of years ago, Spanish settlers brought the first horses and cows to North America. They needed people to work the herds of cattle on wide-open lands. These first cowboys included both Native Americans and African Americans.

COWBOY WAYS

Over many years, cowboys shared different ways and special gear to work cattle. Many of these tools are still used by cowboys today, like the hat, chaps, rope, and branding iron. When it was time to move cattle north along trails to railroad stations, cowboys used many herding traditions handed down over the years.

RODEOS

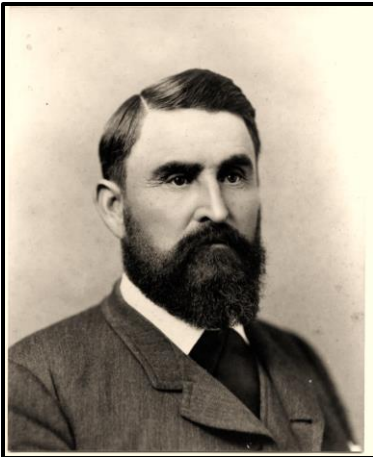
When not on the trail, cowboys worked on ranches. They enjoyed showing off their skills in contests with each other. That's how the first rodeos (Spanish for "round up") began. So, every time you see cowboys in western movies or television shows, remember that they come from many backgrounds. But they all share a love for the hard work of a cowboy.

WATCH AND LEARN:

Explore this video to learn how the day-to-day life of the cowboy became rodeo!



LEGENDS: CHARLES GOODNIGHT



A LEGEND IN THE MAKING

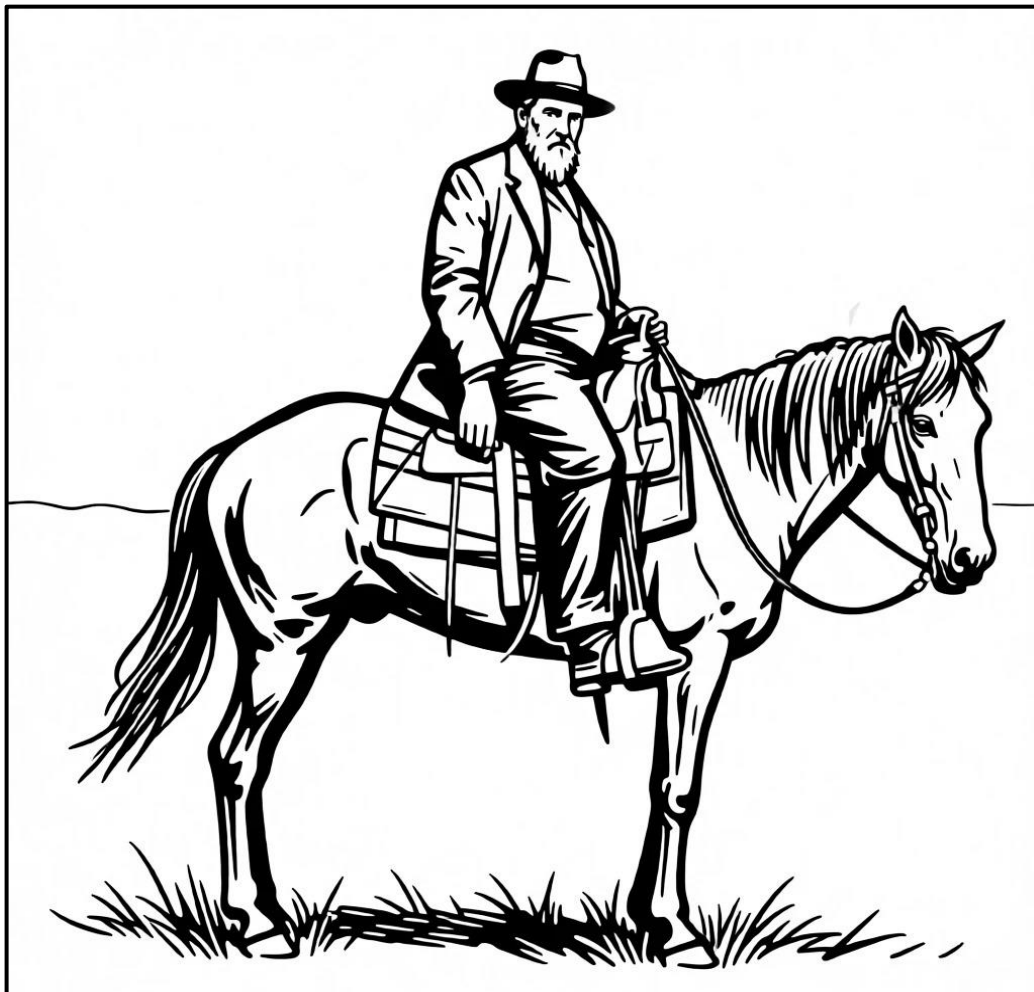
Charles Goodnight was one of the most famous cowboys in history. He grew up to be a brave pioneer who loved the open range. People even called him the "Father of the Texas Panhandle" because he helped settle that part of the country.

A HARD-WORKING COWBOY

Charles is best known for blazing the Goodnight-Loving Trail. With his loyal friend, Oliver Loving, he herded thousands of cattle across dangerous lands. To make life easier for the outfit's cowboys, he invented the chuck wagon. It was like a food truck – a "kitchen on wheels" worked by "Cookie."

A CARING LEADER

Charles wasn't just a tough rancher; he was also a very caring person. When he saw that the American bison were disappearing, he and his wife took action! Charles and his cowboys rescued orphaned calves, and Mary Ann bottle-fed the babies to keep them alive. Those bison helped rebuild the entire bison population in North America. They even sent some of their bison to help start herds in Yellowstone National Park.



A FAIR TRAIL BOSS

Charles was also honest and fair with his cowboys. He showed that being a cowboy meant working hard and taking care of the land and animals.

WATCH AND LEARN:

Discover more about the Chuckwagon



LEGENDS: BILL PICKETT



BECOMING A COWBOY

This is a story about one of the bravest, toughest cowboys to ever ride the range and how he became a legend. Bill Pickett was born in Texas a long time ago. When some children were reading books, Bill was learning how to “read” animals. More than anything, he wanted to be a cowboy.

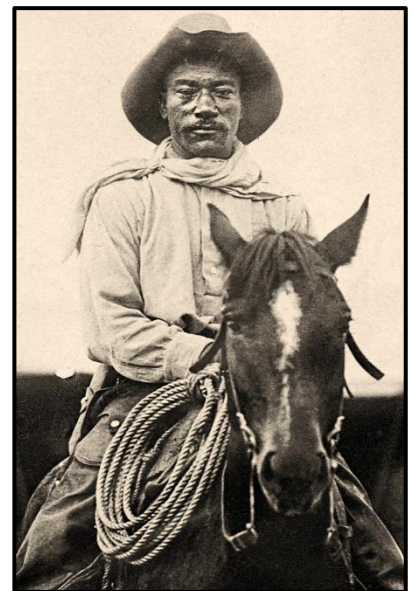


BILL'S SECRET TRICK

One day, as he watched a herd of longhorn being driven north, he saw how the cattle dogs, called “bull dogs,” could stop a big steer right in its tracks! The dogs actually bit the lips of the cow to bring it down! Bill thought he could do the same thing!

WILD WEST SHOWS

People started talking about Bill's “bulldogging” talent. He was asked if he would like to show people what he could do. Bill joined the famous 101 Ranch Wild West Show and traveled around the world. Thousands of people came to see and cheer him on.



FAME AND “STARDOM”

Bill was so popular with his fans that Hollywood asked for him to act in western movies. Later, Bill Pickett was inducted into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame. The U.S Postal Service chose him for a “Legends of the West” stamp. Life wasn't easy for many African Americans like Bill. But he proved that cowboys come from many backgrounds. They all share a love of the West and the hard but rewarding work on the range.

LISTEN AND LEARN:

Listen to this podcast to learn more about Bill's amazing career.



LEGENDS: LUCILLE MULHALL

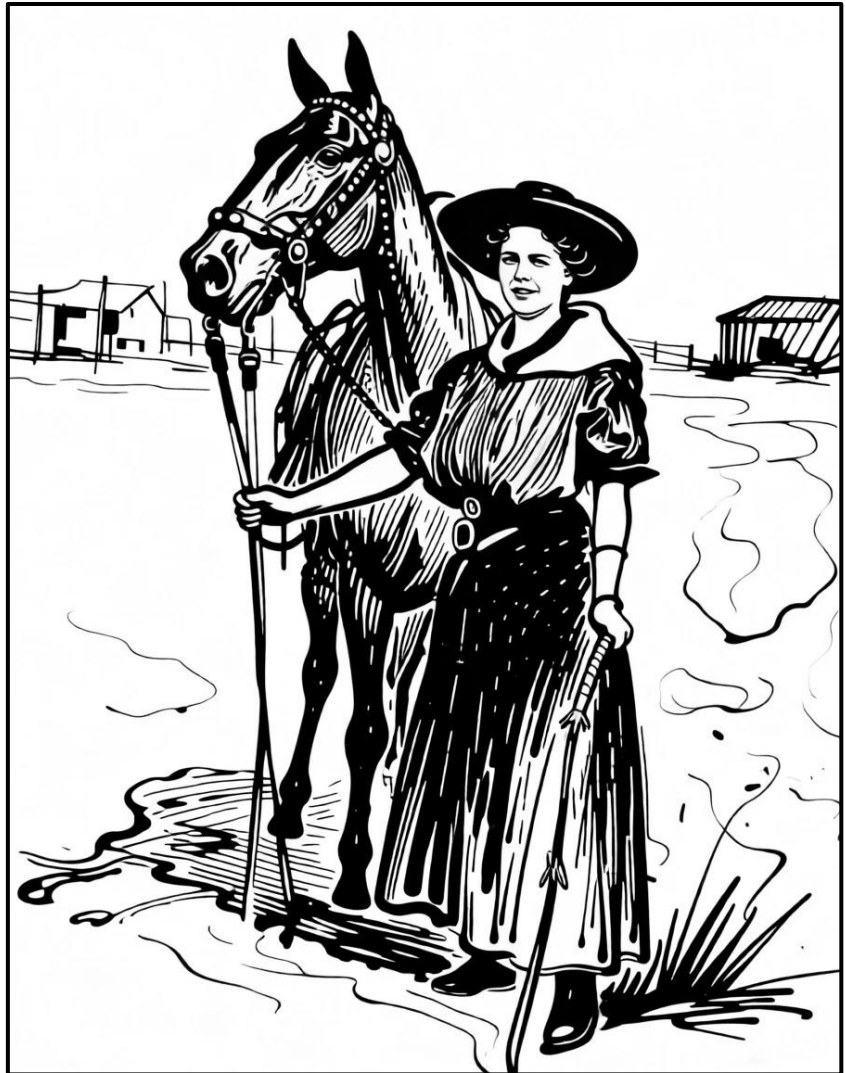


ON THE RANCH

Long ago, on the wide-open prairies of northern Oklahoma, lived a young girl named Lucille Mulhall. She wanted to show everyone that she was just as tough as any cowboy. Already, Lucille was working on the family ranch. She could ride fast horses and toss a rope, catching moving targets.

IN THE SHOW

Lucille started showing her amazing talents in Wild West Shows. At that time, most people thought roping and riding were jobs only for men. But when Lucille stepped into the arena, she changed everyone's minds. As the story goes, a famous friend from Oklahoma, Will Rogers, called her the very first "cowgirl."



AS A PIONEER

Lucille became a Western legend! She broke the rules of what people thought girls could do. She was the first woman known to rope and tie a steer in a contest against men. She once set a world record for steer roping. When President Theodore Roosevelt came to the Mulhall ranch, Lucille proved that she could even rope a wild wolf!

Lucille Mulhall was a pioneer because she was one of the first women to do things that people believed only men could do. She showed us that with hard work and courage, you can be a pioneer in whatever you love to do.

LISTEN AND LEARN: This Week in the West podcast



LEGENDS: JACKSON SUNDOWN



Jackson was the first Native American to win that title. It showed that it doesn't matter where you come from or how old you are, if you have courage and determination, you can be a champion.

MORE THAN A COWBOY

People called him a cowboy, Native American, bronco buster, and rodeo champion. He was all of these things and more. Jackson Sundown was a legend who proved that you're never too old to chase a dream.

WILD HORSES

Jackson was from the Nez Perce Tribe who were known as great horse riders and breeders. Jackson also grew up taking care of livestock. But he kept building his skills as a tamer of wild horses. He could ride the wildest horses that other cowboys couldn't.

RODEO DREAMS

Jackson competed in many rodeos but he longed to win the Pendleton Round-Up. He was already over 50 years old and some people thought he should just go home and retire from bronco riding.

WORLD CHAMPION

He decided to give it one more try at the 1916 Round-Up. The horse he was assigned to ride was named Angel, but that horse was no angel. He jumped, twisted and kicked so hard that the ground shook! The crowd cheered Jackson on and when time was called, Jackson was still on!



LISTEN AND LEARN:

Listen to this podcast from the National Cowboy Museum and learn more about the legendary Jackson Sundown.

LEGENDS: ANNIE OAKLEY



TOUGH BEGINNINGS

Annie Oakley was a true legend. She grew up in a very poor family. After her father passed away, she had to help her family. She taught herself how to hunt so she could provide food for the table.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Annie faced many challenges. Life was very hard for a young girl back then, and some people thought girls shouldn't shoot like boys. But Annie never gave up. She practiced until she could hit a tiny target from far away!

STAR OF THE SHOW

Her life changed when she joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. She became a world-famous star known as sharpshooter, called "Little Sure Shot." That was a name Chief Sitting Bull, a dear friend, gave her. Annie showed the world that girls could be just as brave and skilled as boys.

A TRUE HERO

Annie Oakley is a real hero who cared about others. She taught other girls how to shoot and gave away much of her prize money to the poor. She proved that with practice and courage, anyone can hit their targets in life.



ANNIE'S MOTTO

"Aim at a high mark and you will hit it. No, not the first time, nor the second time...But keep on shooting, for only practice will make you perfect. Finally, you will hit the bull's-eye of success."

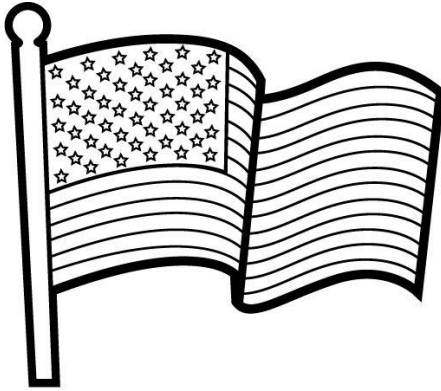


WATCH AND LEARN:

Enjoy this PBS video
"Annie Oakley, True Story."



LEGENDS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, USA



WHY WE CELEBRATE?

In 2026, our country will celebrate a very big birthday, the 250th anniversary of the *Declaration of Independence*! Long ago, the first American colonists dreamed of a life where they could make their own choices. As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, we can see those same dreams in the story of the American West.

Even though the *Declaration of Independence* was signed far away in Philadelphia by our Founding Fathers, its message of freedom, fairness and equal opportunity traveled all the way West. We Westerners are proud of our wide-open spaces, the prairies, mountains, deserts and rivers of the West. We also honor respect the many different people who live here.

THE "WESTERN SPIRIT" TODAY

People in the West still value the same things that the early colonists did:

- ❖ **Self-Reliance**
Just like cowboys, people today solve their own problems.
- ❖ **Space to Grow**
Families still move West because they want the freedom to start something new.
- ❖ **Protecting Nature**
We work hard today to keep our lands, waters and wildlife healthy.

Whether it was a colonist in the past or a person living in the West today, the goal is the same: to live a life where you are free to follow your dreams.

We celebrate by looking to the past, sharing the stories of the brave people who helped build our towns and protect our way of life.

We also look forward to keeping our promise of being good neighbors and responsible citizens.

