



## Black Seminole Scouts Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts

### *Purpose of the Exhibit*

*A Long Hard Ride Into History* explores the contributions of the African-American cowboy in the Old West. This exhibit highlights the early migrations of slaves from the South, through the settling and taming of the West. This unique collection of authentic memorabilia can be used as a powerful tool to educate students and adults about some rarely shared Western American history. Each artifact focuses on historical African-American cowboy figures.

The exhibit features 40 pieces of African-American cowboy artwork and artifacts from the extensive collection of Mr. Murphy Darden including:

- Movie Posters
- Original Drawings
- Artifacts
- Clothing
- Original Paintings
- Newspaper Clippings
- Books
- Cowboy Gear



*Left: Twenty-fifth United States Infantry Regiment  
The 25th served from 1866 to 1946 as apart of the  
Buffalo Soldiers.*

*Type of Exhibit: Historical  
Security Level: Medium*

### *A Long Hard Ride Into History*

A Long Hard Ride Into History exhibit is an educational program developed to help people with the following:

- Becoming more educated about African American heritage
- Learning to embrace diversity and tolerance
- Direct encounters with new role models
- Increased knowledge of the complete history of the Western United States frontier.

Traveling African American Cowboy Exhibit

# A Long Hard Ride Into History

*Explore the history and contributions  
of the African-American Cowboy in the Old West*

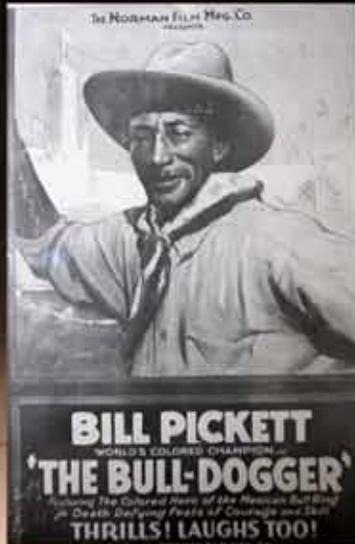
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# A Long Hard Ride Into History



*Arthur "A.J." Walker Sr., a legendary black cowboy who performed around the country and hosted rodeos at his 40-acre Liberty County ranch for many years.*



*Bill "The Bull Dogger" Pickett was billed as "the world's colored champion" in "death-defying feats of courage and skill." He invented the technique of bulldogging.*



*Authentic western cowboy equipment and artifacts*



*Clara Brown born in 1800 and was a former slave from Virginia. She aided settlement of former slaves during the time of Colorado's Gold Rush.*



*Ned Huddleston (also known as Isom Dart) earned a reputation as one of the best riders, ropers and bronco-busters in the West.*

## Discover and Explore the History of the African American Cowboy

You won't find them in Hollywood's old Western movies, except maybe as slaves or comics. You won't find them in history books either. They are the African American cowboys of the late 1800s. From the plantations of the South to the plains of Texas, African American cowboys made their mark on the cattle industry and rodeos of our nation.

Many of the slaves had come from African countries like Ghana and Gambia where they had herded cattle. Plantation owners with large herds of cattle often preferred these slaves because they already possessed skills

in herding animals. Slaves worked cattle in the tall grass, pine barrens and marshes of South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana and other parts of the South into southeastern Texas. A few of these slaves worked on horseback, but most used dogs, bullwhips and salt to control the cattle.

When the American Civil War began, Texas ranchers went off to war. They left their slaves to run the ranches while they were away. The slaves learned every aspect of the cattle ranching business. Since barbed wire hadn't been invented yet, they had a hard time keeping the

cattle on their land. Subsequently, they became excellent riders and ropers as they rounded up the cattle.

After the Emancipation, former slaves were free to find other employment. Because of racial oppression and the shortage of jobs among African American men back East, many who had cared for cattle began to move westward.

Some found work as ranch hands. As demand for beef grew, so did the demand for cowboys to drive Texas cattle north to the nearest train depot. Cowboys drove more than five million head of cattle north and east from Texas

between 1866 and 1885. Between 5,000 and 8,000 African American cowboys, mostly ex-slaves, are believed to have ridden the cattle trails between 1866 and 1896, about a fourth of the total number of cowboys.

By the end of the late 19th century, barbed wire had closed up the range and the arrival of the railroad in the West had changed the cattle industry. Although history books have recorded the carrel drives, many historians, artist, photographers and moviemakers have excluded the subject of African American cowboys.