



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Andy Adams. Then, answer questions about it.

Andy Adams 1859–1935

Born in Indiana in 1859, writer Andy Adams lived the cowboy life on the Texas plains. He later rendered those experiences in fiction to set Americans straight about life in the West.

Adams arrived in South Texas in 1881 and began rounding up livestock to send to Kansas. Through his work, he became fascinated with cowboys—their speech, culture, and work habits.

In the 1890s, Adams moved on to Colorado to pursue mining opportunities. While there, he attended a production of the play *A Texas Steer* and was offended by its wild-and-woolly portrayal of Texas cowboys. Cowboys were not yahoos in Adams's mind, but practical workingmen who relied more on their wit than their guns. He began writing stories to make his point.

In 1903, Adams published his first novel, *The Log of a Cowboy*, which recounts a trail drive from Brownsville to Montana. Adams's focus was not the wildness of the West, but its peaceful, pastoral nature—and the effect the land had on the men who worked it. J. Frank Dobie called it “the best book that can ever be written about cowboy life.” More recently, Larry McMurtry drew upon Adams's novel when writing *Lonesome Dove*.

Adams published six more books on ranching life and helped shape the genre of western fiction. He died in 1935.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Andy Adams. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Why did Andy Adams begin writing stories?
2. How did Adams' portrayal of the West differ from other writers?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Creating Connections.** What invention contributed to the end of cattle drives and the open range?