

TEACHER'S GUIDE
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MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"

On the XIT Ranch

The XIT Ranch was a cattle ranch in Northern Texas that operated from 1885 to 1912. At its height, the ranch stretched over 3,000,000 acres across the Texas Panhandle, and was a major contributor to the booming Texas cattle industry. By 1912, however, growing debts forced XIT owners to sell their land, much of which was later converted into farmland. In this photo, taken in 1904, XIT ranchers use a hot iron to burn the XIT insignia into each cow's flesh with a hot iron (a practice known as branding) in an attempt to discourage theft.



Source: W.D. Harper, "Branding on the XIT," 1904, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C. Photo copyrighted by C.A. Kendrick, Denver.
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