

# Western Road Trip Newsletter



The start of my Walking tour of Dodge City, KS

Day 3  
Monday  
October 28th  
Another day  
in  
Dodge City, Kansas

### Stats

35.1 miles  
1038 total miles this trip  
MPG:

### Weather

High Temp: 78  
Low Temp: 45  
Conditions: Sunny & windy

## Hello to my Family and Friends!

I started the day with my free breakfast here at the Dodge House Hotel. Unfortunately, the kitchen is the same one that served my steak last night. Need I say more?

I did a little research on the net and then headed downtown. I found the Visitor's Center, parked, and stepped inside.



Dodge City Visitor Center

The lady inside gave me a brochure for the Historic Dodge City Walking Tour, talked about a few other things, then she gave me advice on where to shop for cowboy boots.

I had shopped around home, but decided I would get a better

selection, and probably a better deal, right down here in the heart of cowboy country. I also signed the register for which I received a push pin to stick in the part of the country where I came from. If you look closely at the map below, you can just about see my yellow push pin. You have to look real hard now.

*"I thought it was going to be a cheesy tourist trap!"*



The Classic Wooden Indian



My first stop was the 1903 Santa Fe Locomotive

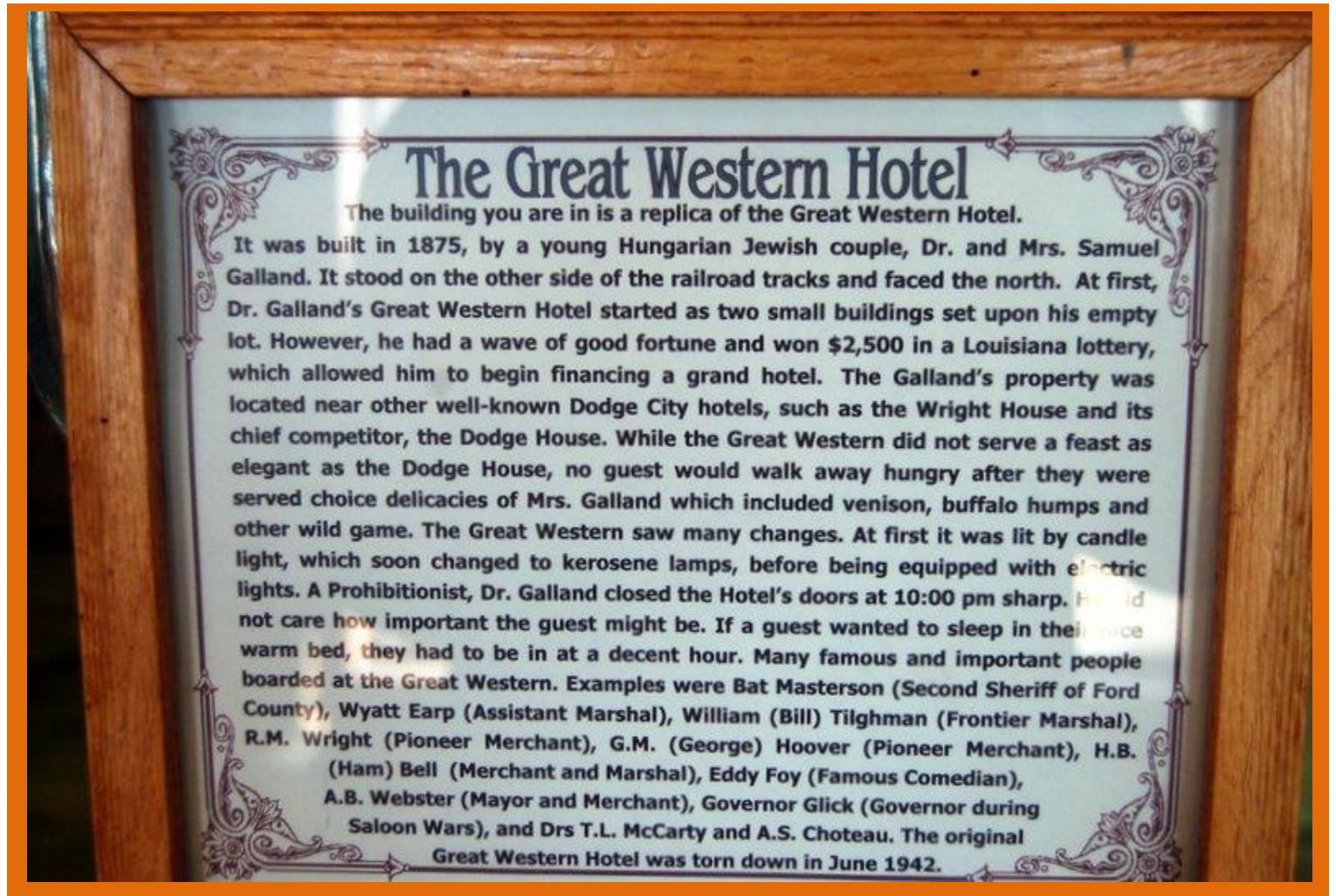


This is the plaque by the engine

This is the interior view of the cab

Next stop: the tour of Boot Hill and Old Front Street starts here, at the Great Western Hotel. Inside was a gift shop, a short movie on the history of Dodge City, and then on to Boot Hill Cemetery.

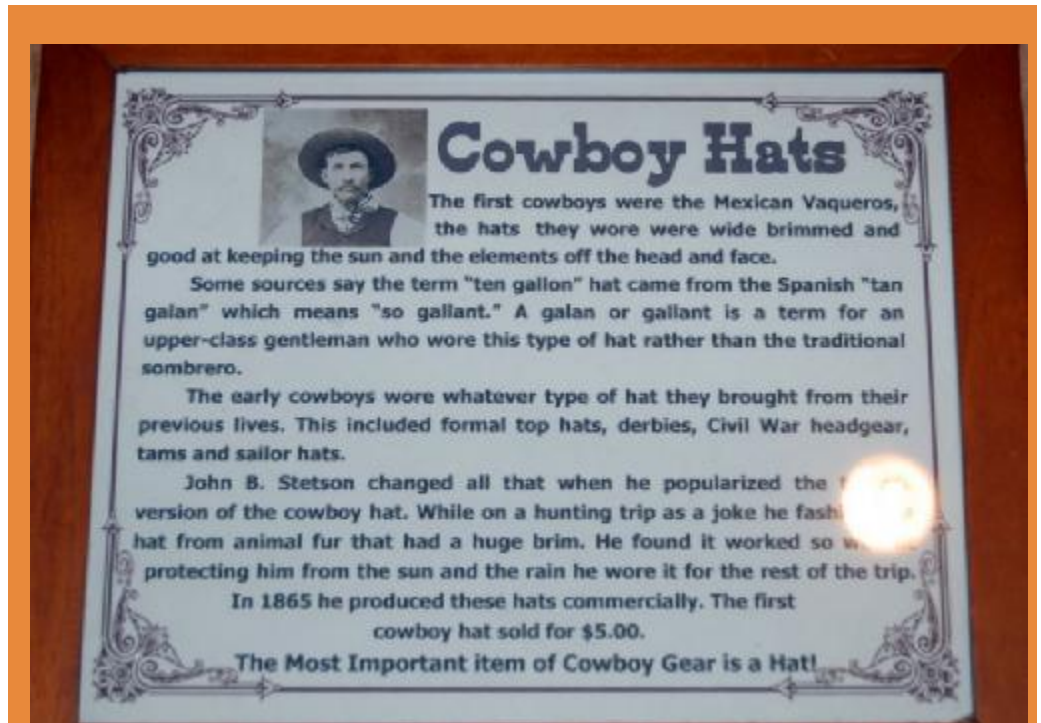
The plaques below were in the Hotel and seemed interesting enough to put here.





There were several small branding irons for sale on a display next to the plaque. I checked, but the "S" was all sold out.

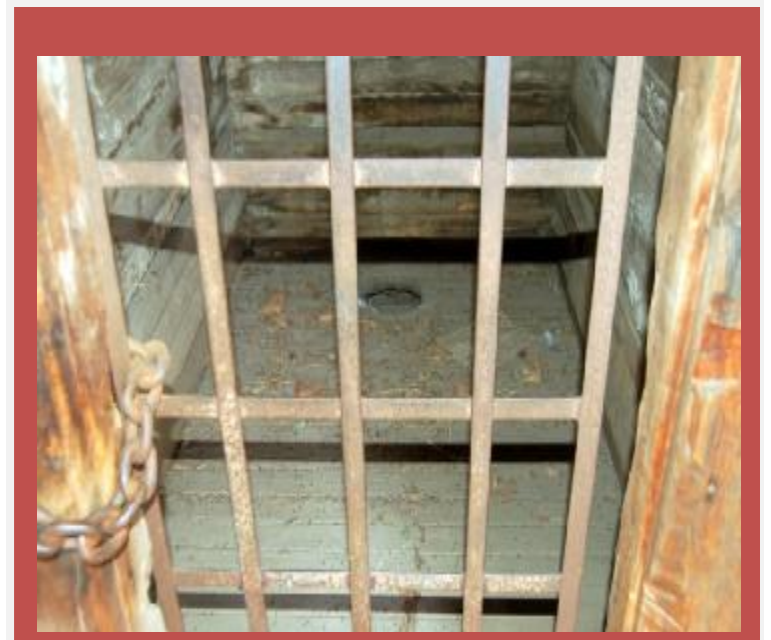
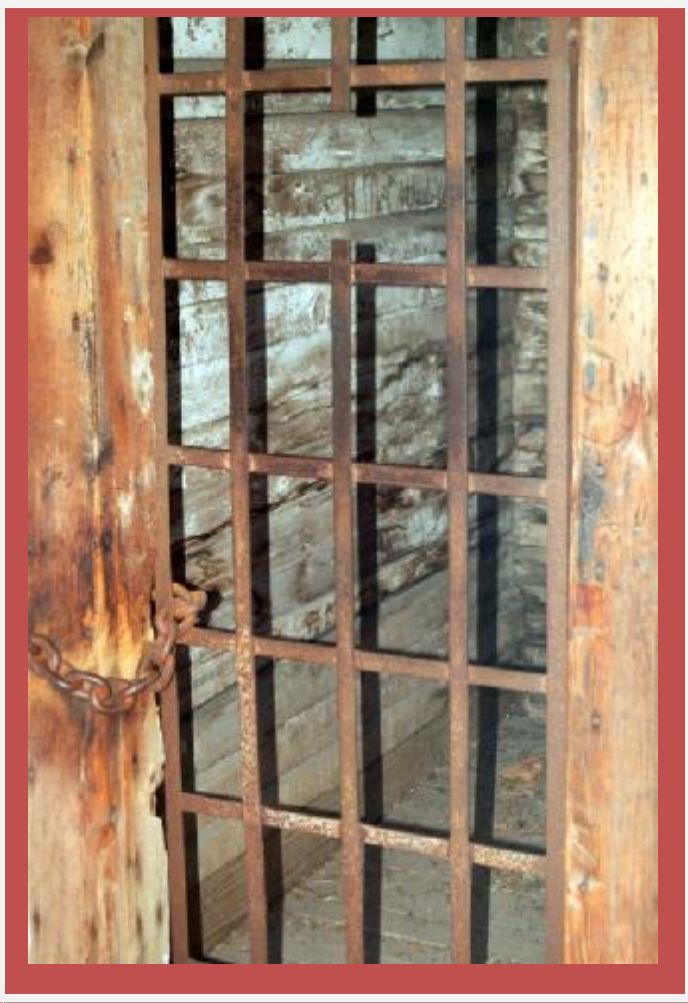
The most important item of cowboy gear is a Hat! Hmm. I skipped getting a regular cowboy hat for my ride and am sticking with my Kangaroo skin hat I wear for golfing. It will set me apart from the crowd. (and probably look stupid also)



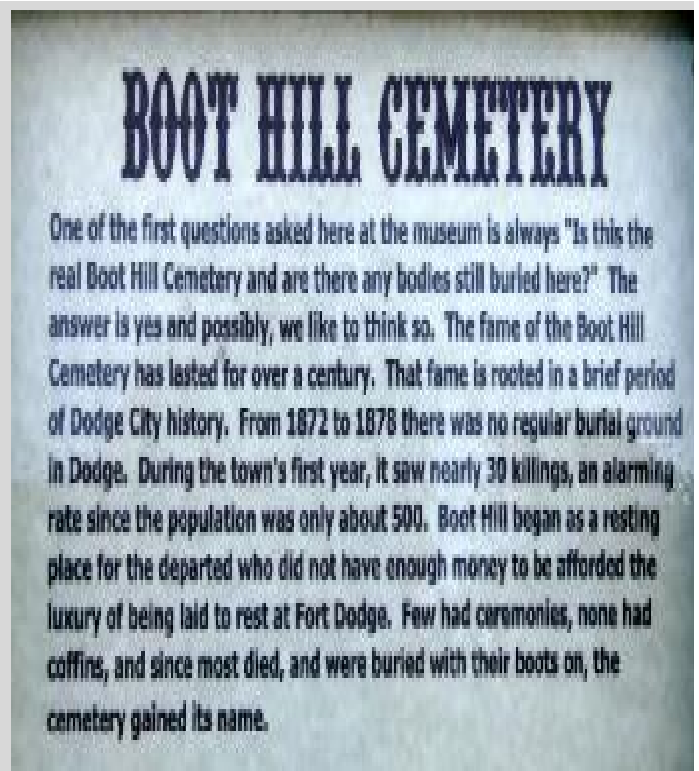
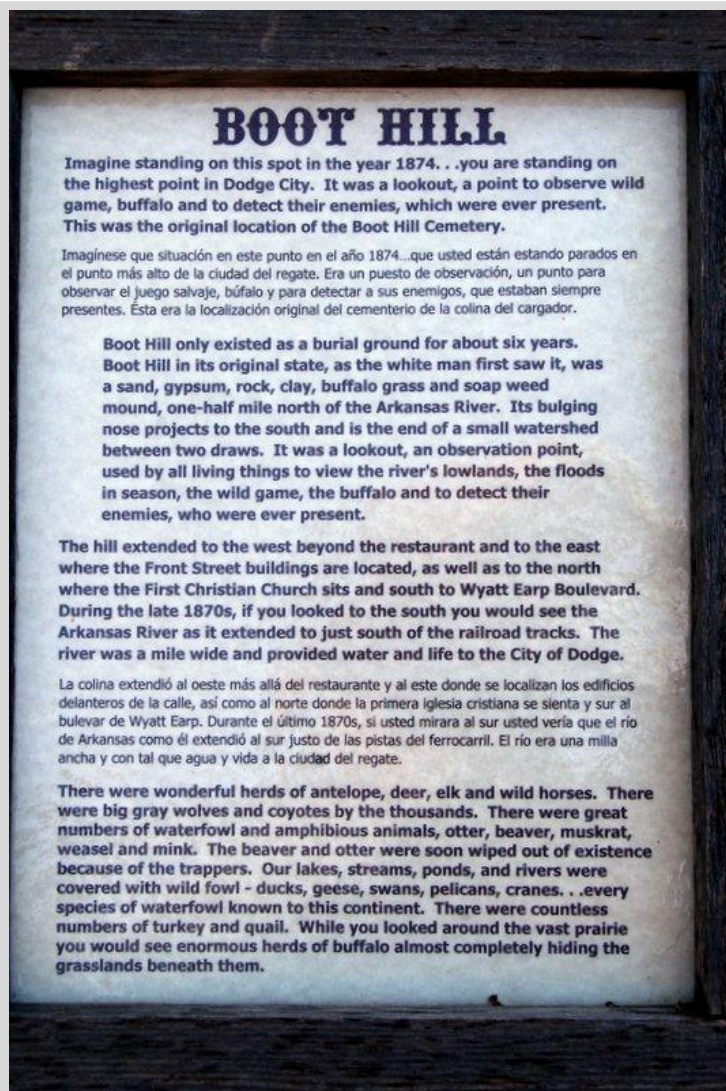
After the movie you are directed upstairs to a rear door, basically on a level with the cemetery, and follow a concrete path to the sign pictured below. I continued left towards Boot Hill. We will visit Front Street after paying our respects to the dearly departed.



The Fort Dodge Jail dates back to 1865 when Fort Dodge was established five miles east of present day Dodge City. The Fort was built to protect travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. I don't think I would like to spend any length of time in here. Note the hole in the floor? Not a pretty site for doing "your business".



Now we get to the heart of the matter, Boot Hill Cemetery. I hope you can read the plaques, so no commentary. I will say that the different ways in which people died, or were killed, can sometimes make you laugh.



The Boot Hill Cemetery is located on the northwest corner of the original cemetery. It was closed in 1879 and the remains moved to a new cemetery northeast of town. It was never an official burial ground, but was used primarily for bodies of buffalo hunters, drifters and others who had no family in the area. No one famous was ever buried here.

**THE NAMES OF ABOUT HALF OF THE PEOPLE BURIED ON BOOT HILL WERE RECORDED BY NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE STATE. THEY WERE:**

**ALICE CHAMBERS**  
MAY 5, 1878  
BELIEVED TO BE THE ONLY WOMAN BURIED ON BOOT HILL. HERS WAS THE LAST BURIAL HERE

**EDWARD HURLEY**  
JANUARY 1873  
KILLED IN A SHOOTING SPREE IN A SALOON

A BUFFALO HUNTER NAMED **McGILL** SHOT MARCH 1873

**JACK REYNOLDS**  
SEPTEMBER 1872  
THE FIRST RECORDED KILLING IN DODGE CITY. HE WAS SHOT SIX TIMES BY A RAILROAD TRACK LAYER

**UNKNOWN**  
FOUND HANGING FROM A TREE WEST OF DODGE CITY

**ELLIS** Shot By **DAVID BURRELL**, A BARTENDER IN THE DODGE HOUSE, JULY 1873

**CHARLES** <sup>Texas</sup> **HILL** AND **ED WILLIAMS** FEBRUARY 9, 1873  
KILLED IN A DANCE HALL BY THE DODGE CITY 'VIGILANCE COMMITTEE'

**McDERMOTT** 'PLUGGED' FEB. 1873 BY CASEY, A FRIEND OF EDWARD HURLEY

**CHARLES WHEDON** A BUFFALO HUNTER, SHOT ON SEPTEMBER 10, 1876

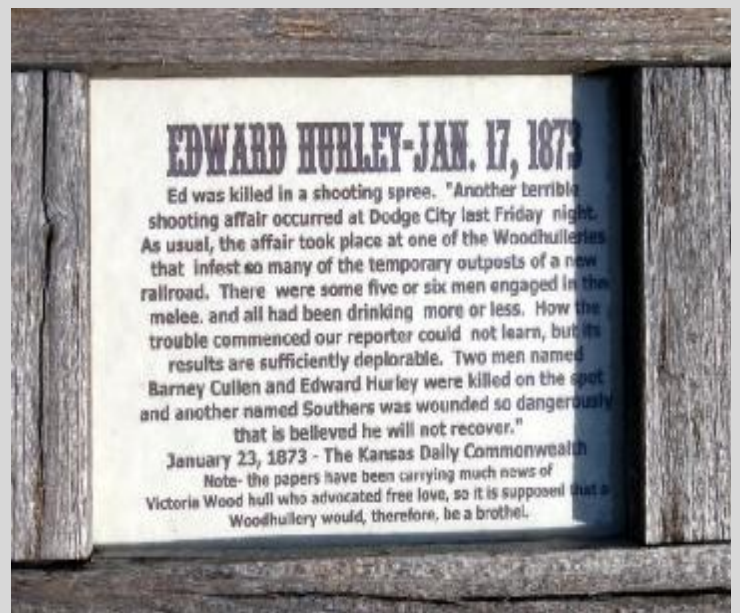
**J.M. ESSINGTON** NOVEMBER 1872  
A CARPENTER AND PART OWNER OF THE ESSINGTON HOTEL, SHOT BY THE COOK

**JOHN WAGNER** DIED APRIL 1878 of WOUNDS DURING SHOOT-OUT With ED MASTERSON

**Charley MOREHOUSE** A GAMBLER BY TRADE. DIED DECEMBER 1872

**FIVE BUFFALO HUNTERS** WHOSE FROZEN BODIES WERE FOUND NORTH OF DODGE CITY ON FEB. 2, 1873 FOLLOWING a BLIZZARD

**BARNEY CULLEN** JANUARY 1873  
A RAILROAD EMPLOYEE WHO WAS KILLED DURING A SHOOTING SPREE IN A SALOON





This one is ready for you



There were several displays in The Boot Hill Building about the history of Dodge City, its Hollywood influence, tools, clothing, furniture and all those types of things you see in a normal museum. There was one unique spot. As I stood looking at the full size buffalo to the right, several monitors above talked about the history of the buffalo, Indians and the white man.



As the monitors showed the buffalo hunt scenes from *Dances with wolves*, and the sounds of the thundering hooves, the floor began to vibrate as if I was really standing on the prairie and watching the buffalo thunder by. Really cool. The effect of the building itself was similar to *The Streets of Old Milwaukee* section of the Milwaukee Public Museum, and my girls know that is my favorite area of the museum. There was also the same feeling in the buildings of Front Street pictured below. I thought it was going to be a cheesy tourist trap, but it was very enjoyable.



A full size stuffed Longhorn



The old wooden buildings are connected inside with displays and artifacts from the 1870's.

I bought some homemade mint fudge at the General Store, which I just finished eating as my midnight snack.

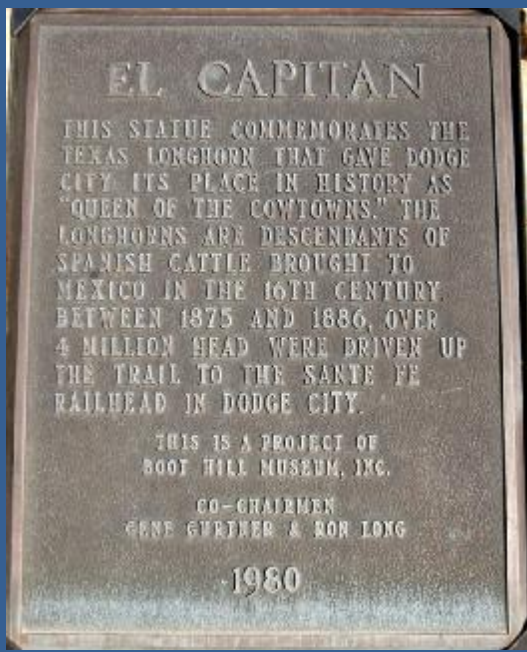


The bar at the Long Branch Saloon



After leaving Front Street I started my walking tour of downtown Dodge City with the statue of El Capitan.

The statue of Wyatt - Buffalo hunter, Teamster, lawman, gambler and saloon keeper he served as Assistant City Marshall 1876-1878. Briefly was Ford County Deputy Sheriff under "Bat" Masterson in 1878 before leaving for Las Vegas, New Mexico, not Nevada.



Erin, this one is for Flynn. Erin's collie is named after Errol Flynn. He co-starred with Olivia DeHaviland in the 1939 movie *Dodge City*, the first movie ever to premier outside of Hollywood. The film premier brought over 40 Hollywood stars to Dodge City. This medallion is placed in front of the Dodge Theater where the premier took place. At my visit the theater was kaput.

Below is a plaque I saw on a building.

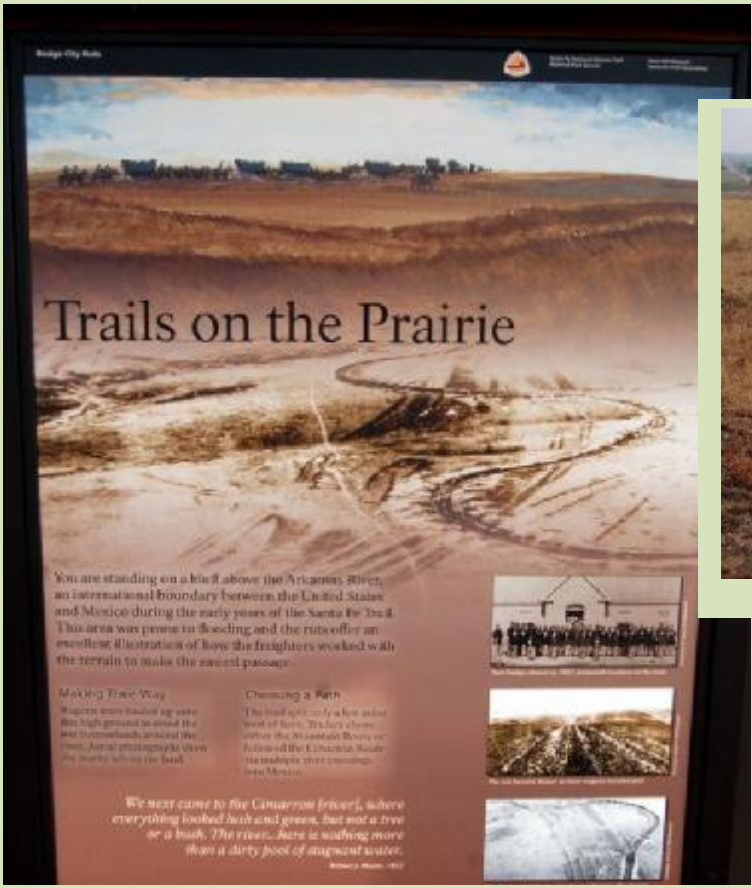


Dodge City's "skyscraper" of five stories is graced with a massive mural painted by Sam Herd. The mural is modeled from Fredrick Remington's "The Old Stagecoach of the Plains" painting.

In 1927, early day pioneer dentist, Dr. O.H. Simpson, sculpted the Cowboy statue to commemorate the Dodge City cowboy era and the cattle drives. Simpson used a live model, Joe Sughrue, to form plaster of paris molds for his sculpture. Sughrue was a former cowboy and later a Marshall of Dodge City.



Yeee Doggies!!! That's right folks, those are the famous cattle feedlots from an overlook east of Dodge City. The plaques state that millions of head of cattle pass through here every year on their way to your table. There is a processing plant to the right which has the traffic of 1000 semis each day, 6 days a week. Enough beef to feed 16 million people every year. The cattle enter the feedlots weighing 600-700 lbs and are fed to a weight of 1000-1200 lbs in just 140 days.



Tracks of the original wagon trail used by pioneers from 1821 to the 1880s located nine miles west Dodge City. There is a nice overlook and a trail down to the tracks. You can stand on a bridge over the tracks and get a close view of one of the most visible tracks left from this historic trail. The area is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. I could not really tell there were any tracks at all. I was disappointed. From what I had read it seemed like you could almost go down and step in the grooves left by the wagon wheels. Oh well. It was desolate and windy on that plain. No trees in sight and the wind at about 30-40 mph.

After all that I ran a few more errands. Bought some cowboy boots. Took a nap back at the hotel. Then decided to walk to Montana Mikes and get a real steak. Mike says they are the best in Dodge City. So I trekked the 1.7 miles to Montana Mikes. They are closed on Mondays. This is what keeps life interesting. Ended up at Arby's across the street. Finished up this newsletter. Hopefully this is the longest and most elaborate one I will have to do, because it took me about 6 hours. I enjoyed it, but the battery died in my mouse and the thunderstorms finally hit, so I could not get another battery from the truck. Working the laptop mousepad with my fingers is something I am not used to.

Tomorrow I should end up in Colorado. Enjoy!