



***Cattle* is a classic cowboy poem written by Berta Hart Nance in 1931.**

The Poetry Society of Texas, organized in 1921, held a contest each year to find the best poem on the subject 'Texas.' In 1931 Berta Hart Nance, from Shackleford County, near Albany, Texas, noticed that for years every poem that won the contest was about 'cotton.' Berta Hart Nance was from cow country, and she thought it was time to change that. So, she wrote a poem entitled "Cattle," sent it in, and won the contest. Her poem has become a classic in Texas.

## ***Cattle***

Berth Hart Nance, 1931

Other states are carved or born,  
Texas grew from hide and horn.

Other states are long or wide,  
Texas is a shaggy hide,  
dripping blood and crumpled hair;  
some fat giant flung it there,  
laid its head where valleys drain,  
stretched its rump across the plain.

Other soil is full of stones,  
Texans plow up cattle bones.  
Herds are buried on the trail,  
underneath the powdered shale;  
herds that stiffened like the snow,  
where the icy northers go.

Other states have built their halls,  
humming tunes along the walls.  
Texans watched the mortar stirred,  
while they kept a lowing herd.  
Stamped on Texan wall and roof  
gleams the sharp and crescent hoof.  
High above the hum and stir  
jingle bridal-rein and spur.

Other states were carved or born,  
Texas grew from hide and horn.

Berth Hart Nance, 1931

*When reciting poetry, cite the author and date before and after reciting.*

*Story copyright: Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Inc • Poetry copyright: author.*

*LoneStarCowboyPoetry.com • Alpine, TX / Bastrop, TX • Feb 19-21, 2026*