The much talked of Texas Longhorns, popularized in fact and fiction of the old West, were cattle of Spanish extraction not noted for their beef. Starting about 1600, cattle were brought over as work and milk animals in connection with the chain of Christian Missions which the Spaniards had established. By 1833, the missions owned about 424,000 head of these cattle, many of which were semi-wild. They had little commercial value except for their hides.

Today, only a few Longhorns remain, and they’re used for show and novelty purposes, not for beef on the table.