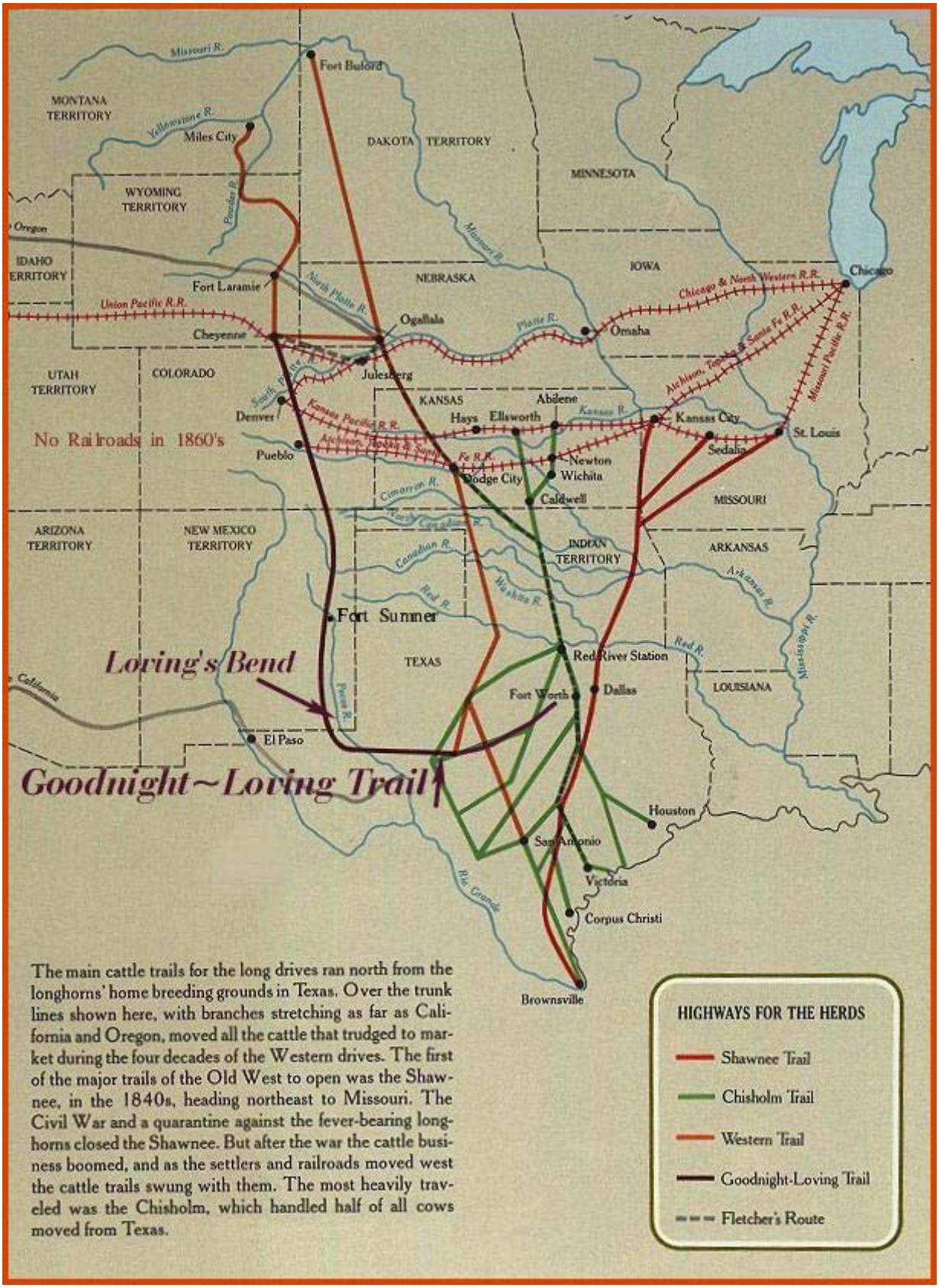

The main cattle trails for the long drives ran north from the longhorns' home breeding grounds in Texas. Over the trunk lines shown here, with branches stretching as far as California and Oregon, moved all the cattle that trudged to market during the four decades of the Western drives. The first of the major trails of the Old West to open was the Shawnee, in the 1840s, heading northeast to Missouri. The Civil War and a quarantine against the fever-bearing longhorns closed the Shawnee. But after the war the cattle business boomed, and as the settlers and railroads moved west the cattle trails swung with them. The most heavily traveled was the Chisholm, which handled half of all cows moved from Texas.