

1 - EARLY LIFE.

I was born in Columbus, Wisconsin, in the year 1860, and immigrated to Colorado, with my mother and the rest of the Allen tribe, in 1863. We traveled with bull teams and prairie schooner, and made our last camp on the St. Vrain River, one mile south of where Longmont now stands. Here we found my father and half brother, William H. Dickens, improving new land. My mother soon took the job of keeping the home station for the old Overland Stage Company, and served meals at \$1.50 per. Father didn't count much in my life, as he was busy cutting slough grass with a scythe, bailing it in a stamping press, hauling it to the mountain mining camps with ox teams and receiving \$140 per ton.

My parents didn't need my help for their support, so I was allowed to run at large or go to school when there wasn't more excitement elsewhere. I mostly ran at large, but never went astray so far that I would miss a meal or anything exciting or dangerous.

Mr. Dickens had by this time accumulated a band of horses and cattle which ranged mostly in Boulder County (a small county), but wild and wooly in those days. The stock needed attention, and I was pressed into service at an age when I should have been on a nursing bottle. In 1868, Mr. Dickens and my mother chipped in and had Billy Thompson, the first saddler in the old town of Burlington, send to California for a saddle tree and leather, and built a saddle to my measure, for which they put down 125 plunks. With this new hand-carved saddle, new bridle, spurs and slouch hat,



Alonzo's brother George in 1869, looking like Alonzo must have when he got his saddle.

I started out to be a full-fledged cowboy. If they had thrown in a pair of dog-skin chaps, my outfit and happiness would have been complete.

2 - CHANGING RANGES.

In 1870, Mr. Dickens and my own brothers George and Doll, Captain Brown, and George Ragon, started down to Northeastern Colorado on a buffalo hunt, and to look for a better stock range. It would have been fatal to me if I had been left out of a deal of this kind, so I was taken along to rustle water and buffalo chips. We had two four-horse wagons and several saddle horses. We were well-armed with rim-fire Winchester and Henry Repeating rifles. We also had an old .50-caliber Springfield, which would kill everything in front, and cripple those behind it.

We went through the new colony of Greeley, crossed Crow Creek at the Big Bend, and headed northeast to Pawnee waterholes—took in Pawnee Buttes, Spring Creek, Two Mile, and finally pulled up at Old Ranger Jones' cow camp on Cedar Creek. There Old Ranger put us wise to the location at the head of Cedar Creek, two miles west. We found this to be just what we wanted in the way of grass, and living water, and the country broken enough for shelter. The men said they would locate right there.

We had seen on our trip thousands of buffalo, and tens of thousands of antelope, but there had not been more than one antelope killed for immediate use, as we wanted to get located first. Now that trouble was off our minds, we could sail right in and load up. We headed south toward home, and by the time we had crossed Cottonwood Draw, and reached South Pawnee Water Holes, we had all the buffalo meat the wagons would hold. I still have a trophy, a pair of the largest buffalo horns that can be found in any country. We didn't kill antelope, for they were common near home. I have killed antelope where Mead and Highland Lake now stand, since Longmont became the capital of St. Vrain County.

3 - MOVING CATTLE IN WINTER.

After our return home, there was no time lost in getting ready to gather the