

A Texas Cowboy

or fifteen years on the hurricane deck of a Spanish pony.

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THE AUTHOR,
IN COW BOY UNIFORM.

just how I stood. As often as I had been with her I had never let her know my thoughts. She being only fourteen years of age, I thought there was plenty time. I wrote a long letter explaining everything and then waited patiently for an answer. I felt sure she would give me encouragement, if nothing more.

A month passed by and still no answer. Can it be possible that she don't think enough of me to answer my letter? thought I. "No," I would finally decide, "she is too much of an angel to be guilty of such."

At last the supply wagon arrived from Wichita and among the mail was a letter for me. I was on herd that forenoon and when the other boys came out to relieve Collier and I, they told me about there being a letter in camp for me, written by a female, judging from the fine handwriting on the envelope.

I was happy until I opened the letter and read a few lines. It then dropped from my fingers and I turned deathly pale. Mr. Collier wanted to know if some of my relations wasn't dead? Suffice it to say that the object of my heart was married to my old playmate Billy Williams. The letter went on to state that she had given her love to another and that she never thought I loved her, only as a friend, etc. She furthermore went on advising me to grin and bear it, as there were just as good fish in the sea as ever was caught.

I wanted someone to kill me, so concluded to go to the Black Hills—as everyone was flocking there then. Mr. Collier, the same man I traded the crippled horse to—agreed to go with me. So we both struck out for Wichita to settle up with Daddy Grimes. Mr. Collier had a good horse of his own and so did I; mine was a California pony that I had given fifty-five dollars for quite awhile before. My intention was to take him home and make a race horse of him; he was only three years old and, according to my views, a "lightning striker."

After settling up, we, like other "locoed" cowpunchers, proceeded to take in the town, and the result was, after two or three days carousing around, we left there busted with the exception of a few dollars.

As we didn't have money enough to take us to the Black Hills, we concluded to pull for the Medicine River, one hundred miles west.

We arrived in Kiowa, a little one-horse town on the Medicine, about dark one cold and disagreeable evening.

We put up at the Davis House, which was kept by a man named Davis—by the way one of the whitest men that ever wore shoes. Collier made arrangements that night with Mr. Davis to board us on tick until we could get work. But I wouldn't agree to that.

The next morning, after paying my night's lodging, I had just one dollar left and I gave that to Mr. Collier as I bade him adieu. I then headed southwest across the hills, not having any destination in view; I wanted to go somewhere but didn't care where. To tell