

LASSING WILD STEERS

Cattle That Have Run Amuck in Chicago Stock Yards.

A Star Roper of the Wild Animals—Trained Horses Used in Capturing the Crazy Bovines—The Recital of a Lively Experience.

Nowadays wild steers do not escape from the stock yards and frighten the people of the neighborhood half out of their wits with as great frequency as they did a few years ago, but just the same the old-time roping men, with their children, still get the little ones out playing in the streets of the packing-district. Not long ago, however, these escaped steers furnished sensations in that locality. A year or two ago a man especially to run down animals that had gotten out of the yards into the public thoroughfares. Valued connections with the different stock yards and methods of leading the cattle from one point to another have now reduced the number of escapes to a minimum and the company on longer keeps a man in constant readiness to chase the fleeing cattle.

For over five years Harry Partlow, better known as "Wild Horse Harry," a genuine cowboy from Texas, was the chief steer catcher for the Chicago stock yards. In the morning until 2 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon "Wild Horse Harry" used to remain stationed at the big stone entrance to the yards in Exchange Avenue, with his horse in hand and loaded ready to trail the first steer that made his escape. A few years ago the company concluded that escapes were becoming so frequent that it was not worth while to employ a "chaser," and Partlow was relieved of his position. But he is still called upon occasionally to lasso a stray steer.

"Wild Horse Harry" is one of the star characters of the stock yards. He has been a professional stock chaser for over a year and now he is a commission man. He left the company of Frank J. Payne, the actor, in the year 1898, and has made his home in Chicago ever since. He had not been in the city very long and rumor of his prowess as a chaser was spreading and he was soon known to the stock yards company, and at the first opportunity he was engaged to chase the running and roped for escaped horses and steers.

The different gates opening into the stock yards are connected by telephone and the moment an animal escaped a message is sent to the chaser by the telephone. On one occasion a steer was running straight toward his charger, Niger and gallop in pursuit. A frequent companion of Partlow was a black horse named "Old Hoss" for it often required the services of two to effect a quick capture. The chaser, with his well-bred and perfect fitting, rode the animal to chase him, for the steer must be run in a circle until the man who is trying to catch him. If the animal runs toward the lassoer all the latter can do is to put some to his horse and run away.

"I have had some serious experiences with wild steers," said "Wild Horse Harry" to a representative of the Chicago Herald on the other day. "On one occasion a steer that had escaped from the stock yards ran toward me. It was a big steer and I was not prepared to handle him. He started in the opposite direction he didn't have any trouble in jerking down my horse, for he weighed about 1,500 lbs. and he was as strong as a bull.

"One of the liveliest experiences I ever had was down Exchange Street. A steer escaped from the yards and ran down there and I went after him in a hurry. When I got to the street I saw the steer was going about the ground at the side of a high board sidewalk. I spurred my horse along the side of the street and the steer was walking away and I was trying to get a lasso on his head. The animal turned, lowered his head and came at me. I jumped the horse over the board and landed around the corner and the steer paled at the chase. Then the animal dashed wildly at a little crowd of people on the street and they scattered in all directions in time to save themselves. The steer pursued some of the crowd and continued on a gallop down the street.

"It is very difficult to lasso a steer as he runs away from you. If you have had as much luck as I have had in getting a steer to lasso, you will know that it is not easy to do. The animal is very wild and he will try to get away from you. I have had a steer that ran away from me and I was trying to get a lasso on his head. He was very wild and he was trying to get away from me. I had to chase him for a long time and I was very tired when I finally got him.

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