



William Green Dickinson

Rancher and Lawman

1875 - travels to the Verde Valley by wagon train from Missouri.

Born: September 29, 1868 Missouri

Death: September 10, 1931

Burial: Cottonwood Cemetery Plot C 427

Spouse: Nellie Maria Pattee (1876-1932)

Dickinson Line: Samuel Cotton Dickinson → William G Dickinson

Parents

Samuel Cotton Dickinson 1827-1907

Nancy Jane Green Dickinson 1836-1916

Siblings

Margie Ann Dickinson Back 1862-1926

Mariah May Dickinson Hawkins 1864-1889

Frank Lee Dickinson 1867-1925

Alfred "Alf" Dickinson 1870-1940

Edward Virgil Dickinson 1872-1958

Half Siblings:

Leroy Dickinson 1850 - ?

George Wesley Dickinson 1852 - 1901

Charles Dickinson 1853 - 1926

Child:

Carl Lee Dickinson 1896-1970

When William was still a young boy, the Dickinson family joined the wave of settlers heading west to Arizona Territory. In 1875 the family traveled by covered wagon from Missouri to the Verde Valley, arriving during the early years of settlement following the closure of the Verde Indian Reservation. William grew up in the rugged country of central and northern Arizona, where ranching, cattle work, and frontier hardships shaped the character of the early pioneer families.

Like many children of the Verde Valley pioneers, William's early education was simple and practical. In 1877 William and his brother Frank attended school in Middle Verde, where the teacher was Ewan Witts. Among the 13 kids in attendance was Martha Burford. Martha would grow up and marry Charles Dickinson. Outside of school the Dickinson boys learned the skills that would define their lives— handling cattle, riding

the open range, and helping their father build a ranching livelihood in the Arizona Territory.

William's father Samuel established ranching operations and raised a large family in the region. Through hard work and determination, he helped lay the foundation for the Dickinson family's presence in Arizona. William and his brothers grew to adulthood in this frontier environment, carrying forward their father's reputation for independence and perseverance.

As a young man William entered the cattle business with his brother Frank Lee Dickinson. Together the brothers developed extensive ranching interests in central and northern Arizona and became associated with several well-known ranches and cattle operations. Among these was the ranch commonly called the "100 Place," later known as the V Bar V Ranch near present-day Rimrock, Arizona. The Dickinson brothers were long connected with the cattle industry of Yavapai and Coconino counties, their brand becoming one of the early and respected brands in the region.

William Dickinson also became known for his work in law enforcement. During the years when Arizona still carried many of the traits of the Old West, local peace officers were expected to handle difficult situations with limited support and across vast distances. William served first as a deputy sheriff in Yavapai County and is remembered as the first deputy sheriff assigned to the Cottonwood area under the Prescott sheriff's office.

His career in public service expanded steadily. In 1894 he was elected constable along with serving as the Poundmaster. Over the years Dickinson gained a reputation as a capable officer and reliable public servant.

In 1911 he was appointed to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, a position that further established him in county leadership.

In 1913 William Green Dickinson was elected Sheriff of Coconino County, Arizona. He served during a time when the region still faced cattle theft, train robberies, and a variety of frontier-era crimes. Sheriff Dickinson's tenure included numerous investigations and arrests, and he was re-elected in 1916, serving until 1919.

One of the most famous events associated with his career was the pursuit and capture of the Azbill brothers who were wanted for murder. The manhunt lasted weeks and crossed several counties through rough country as far west as the Colorado River. Dickinson's determination eventually led to their capture and conviction, a case widely reported in Arizona newspapers and remembered as one of the notable criminal pursuits of the period.

Sheriff Dickinson was also involved in a wide variety of other cases ranging from livestock disputes to criminal investigations. Newspapers of the time frequently mention his work transporting prisoners, conducting investigations, and maintaining order in communities such as Flagstaff and Williams, and the surrounding ranch country. During the First World War he also issued official notices enforcing federal wartime regulations regarding weapons in the possession of enemy aliens.

Despite his law enforcement duties, ranching remained an important part of William's life. He and his brother Frank continued to operate cattle operations across the central and northern Arizona range. Their partnership reflected the close bond between the brothers, who worked side by side in both ranching and law enforcement.

William Green Dickinson married Nellie Maria Pattee of Flagstaff, who had been born near Janesville, Iowa. Together they established their home in northern Arizona and raised one son, Carl Lee Dickinson.

After years of service to his community, William Green Dickinson passed away on September 10, 1931, in Flagstaff, Arizona. He was laid to rest in Cottonwood Cemetery alongside his parents and other members of the Dickinson family. Today William is remembered as both a cattleman and a lawman of early Arizona. Together with his brother Frank Lee Dickinson, he played a role in the development of the Verde Valley and northern Arizona communities during the final years of the frontier era.

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