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PRINCE OF WALES RANCH AT HIGH RIVER NOT A PLAYTHING; HAS FINE HORSES AND CATTLE

(Elizabeth Forman in New York Herald Tribune.)

In spring the fancy of the world's most eligible bachelor turns, perhaps none too lightly, to a little gray home in the West. And so it is that during this August the village of High River, Alberta, Canada, is roused from its placid obscurity to blink in a rather reluctant and bewildered fashion into a blaze of spotlights. At High River is the cattle ranch bought several years ago by the Prince of Wales and visited by him since in the summer time, as often as royal responsibilities permit. And this summer they are permitting once more.

This is an intimate account of a recent visit to the ranch, penned by one who through long association knows the place perhaps better than does the Prince himself.

When papers all over the world announced a few years ago that Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David, Prince of Wales, K. G., G. C. M. G., G. B. E., M. C., heir apparent to the British throne and future Emperor of India, had purchased a tract of land in Canada, the news was commented on in various ways. That was several years ago.

Today ranchers, farmers and livestock breeders not only in Canada but in many parts of the United States as well known that "the Prince of Wales Ranch" is more than a place where royal nerves may rest undisturbed by the cares of state and the boredom of society.

It was at the county fairs and later at the livestock shows that this fact became apparent. Traveling through the country even in those remote regions reached only by three mixed trains a week (and, oh, how mixed some of them are!), one begins to notice prize cattle being shipped in crated cars to far outlying ranches. Sleek sultans of the animal kingdom they were, contented kings in captivity. They had won blue ribbons and gold medals, many of them, in London, Toronto and Chicago. Yet now they were being sold to colonial cattlemen at nominal figures.

The unpretentious "E. P." on the animals' sides told the rest of the story. The E. P. Ranch they call it, this enterprise that now is being recognized as having a sincere mission in Canada—the distribution of better stock among Western breeders. The initials, of course, stand for Edward Prince.

Stock Brought From Abroad.

Every head of stock on the E. P. Ranch, with the exception of those since born there, was brought to Canada from England, Scotland or France.

There are ponies from the royal farm in Cornwall; sheep from other breeders in England, Clydesdale horses from Scotland and Percherons from France. Every critter on the place has a pedigree as long as your arm. In one pasture alone is a herd composed of 160 head of Shorthorn cattle. The young bulls are kept in three different fields and the calves are in airy, spacious barns. In the corals are some sixty head of horses of four different breeds—besides the Clydesdales and the Percherons there are thoroughbreds and Dartmoor ponies. On the hillside back of the buildings there are Hampshire and Shropshire sheep.

It is nearly five years since the original stock was brought across from England, and now sires from the E. P. Ranch are scattered all over Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Crossing this imported thoroughbred stock with the native Alberta blood already has produced a new and distinctly superior brand of prairie beef cattle and work horses. And, as a result, the E. P. Ranch has come to be something more than just the summer home of the Prince of Wales.

When the Prince made his first visit to his famous place in the shadow of the Rockies there was much ado about his coming. Bands played at the railroad stations all along the way and dignified delegates in top hats were on hand at every stop. There were women, too, ranging in age from six to sixty, all craning their necks for at least a passing glimpse of this young figure from romance come to life in their prosaic midst. There were toasts and speeches. That was the first visit.

Since then everything has been dif-

ferent. Now the Prince is allowed to tarry at his mountain home "unofficially" as Lord Renfrew or as the Duke of Cornwall. Now he can sit on the porch and smoke his pipe, or wander down to the edge of a stream that runs through the garden, with his head bared to the sunshine, and be accepted as he has long wished to be accepted—just as one of the neighbors.

Cottages For Retinue.

But, no matter how democratic a prince may be, he is not, of course, allowed to travel alone. He must have a retinue. So this prince is accompanied to his Canadian retreat by four gentlemen, and the four gentlemen are accompanied by valets. There is a separate cottage to provide sleeping quarters for these other members of the party, so the Prince lives alone in the ranch house, where resides Mrs. Carlyle, the gracious wife of Professor W. L. Carlyle, manager of the E. P. Ranch.

There is little now in the arrival of the royal range rider at High River to suggest to the outsider the homecoming of a prince. Only three or four persons are waiting as the train pulls to a stop in front of the low board station. These are perhaps the Mayor and two or three officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Everybody else has gone on about his business.

There is a hearty handshake all around as the slim, boyish figure, clad in gray tweeds, swings down to the platform from the observation car in the rear, only to be whisked away as quickly as possible along the narrow prairie trail that leads straight into the heart of the sunset.

It is a bumpy highway, as yet untouched by grader or cement mixer. But there are wild roses along the way—and cattle grazing on the slopes. A load of hay, drawn by two competent horses, does its best to share the road with the royal car. An Indian boy rides by, wearing beaded moccasins and a Tom Mix hat. A bevy of startled pheasants scurries out of sight, their whirring wings glinting gold and brown as they seek to hid in a nearby wheat field.

The table is laid for dinner as Mrs. Carlyle opens the door to admit the homecoming guest, and there is no doubt that the meal is ready to serve, for the front door leads directly into the dining room, a square, low-ceilinged inclosure just saved from stiffness by a homey hand. English fox-hunting scenes in old-fashioned wood frames line the walls, the scarlet coats of the riders lending a dash of color to the otherwise drab plasterboard, and everywhere there are wild flowers in the vases carved from cattle horns—rugged Scotch thistles and tall, graceful black-eyed susans.

Books Line Walls.

At the right of the dining room is the kitchen, and to the left is a door leading into the living room. This, too, is a small room, made chunky by an open fire with a couch, with a huge buffalo skin thrown over it. Books are ranged about the low walls in sectional cases. Near the fireplace hangs a bit of Indian beadwork that the Prince calls "what-is-it," a barbaric trinket painfully fashioned of beads and buckskin.

On the mantle there is a battered brass horn which calls guests to dinner. It stands above the dull flicker of the fire and directly beneath the portrait of the King, which occupies the place of honor over the mantel in this room, just as it does in thousands of other rooms much like it throughout the length and breadth of Canada.

The house on the E. P. Ranch is, in fact, scarcely typical of the home occupied by the wealthy Western cattlemen of the present day. True, it is no ordinary prairie bachelor's shack, yet there are many places in its immediate vicinity that are more luxurious. There are ranchers' wives who send to Paris and London for their clothes, and who cover their bird's-eye maple bedsteads with counterpanes of real lace. The plain white "spread" on the bed occupied by Edward Albert in the tiny apartment just off the living room, is almost identical with those used in the High River Hotel, a few miles away, where even now dozens of rugged harvest hands are paying a dollar a night for rooms where they will sleep until they have been assigned to the farms on which they will work

until the time comes for them to return to their homes in the East.

This bedroom of the E. P. Ranch also is small and plain. There is a brass bed, "three-quarter size," with a down comforter draped in fan shape across the bottom; there is a mahogany chiffonier with a small square mirror, the only mirror the room boasts; a wood stove, to "take the chill off the room" when the air is brisk, and, at the foot of the bed, a small mahogany writing desk and a straight-backed chair.

Simple though the furnishings are, they quite fill the little room, leaving barely comfortable space to move between the stove and the bed and beyond, past the chest of drawers and into the bath. This latter luxury is the most modern thing about the place. It was formerly the clothes closet belonging to the room occupied by the Prince. Now it is equipped with a bathtub, a shower and a small square mirror for shaving.

The E. P. Ranch is twenty-seven miles from High River, a picturesque and prosperous small town on the Canadian Pacific Railway. Its windows face the rising sun looking out over a sweep of prairie that billows off as far as the eye can see in many days of travel—a vast virgin prairie awaiting the plowshares of generations yet to come.

Away to the north is country where the wild buffalo was hunted not long since by still wilder Indians, and where the cattle men of a later day have been crowded out by the more matter of fact homestead farmers. A land of forests and trappers, of plains and plainsmen, of cruel snows and gentle chinooks, of mines and mills, of Hudson's Bay trading posts and busy modern cities.

Selkirks in Background.

To the south there is another expanse of territory where farming is done on a big scale on irrigated land; and still farther into the remote distance is the State of Montana. For a background the ranch has the stately Selkirks, with Banff some eighty-odd miles away.

Entering the barn of the ranch, one is greeted by the whinny and paw of a wide-nostrilled thoroughbred. It is Baron Blackwood of the white face and shaggy mane, imported from England as a two-year-old. Here, too, is Will Somers, the King's own favorite mount, which has the distinction of having won the championship every time he has been exhibited. This equine aristocrat is so highly reputed among stock breeders that colts sired by him sell for \$1,000 when they are a year old.

Walls Covered by Pictures.

The inside of the lofty barn is lined with pictures, most of them cut from stock breeders' magazines and pasted on the board walls. There is a page in sepia of H. R. H. the Duke of York, cut from an English farm journal. There are pictures of Highland cattle, and there are hundreds of clippings from the Chicago livestock fairs and rotogravure section portraits of the rodeo artists from the western round-ups.

The E. P. Ranch specializes in beef cattle, so there are no milch cows, no milking machines, no cream cans to be sent to market. It is too far from the railroad for dairy purposes. But this is true of nearly every stock ranch in the Canadian West, where distances must needs be great to enable cattle to have sufficient grazing land.

Outwardly Canadians have more respect for royalty than Americans profess, yet they make less demonstration when members of the reigning house pass by. So, when the Prince wrote to the then Mayor of Calgary and asked him as a special favor to let him go West as a private citizen, people with one accord respected his wishes. George H. Webster was the Mayor to (Continued on Page Three.)

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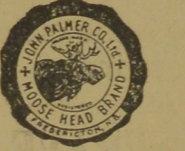
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