

I Shall Never Be a Cowboy

By THOMAS URE PRIMROSE, High River, Alberta

If one is born and raised in the great cowboy areas of the Canadian west, which is as true a cowboy land as there is in North America, it should be only natural that he will be a real cowboy. That is if he has been brought up on a ranch or even a farm in the Foothill district of Alberta or on the great Panhandle belt of Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. It should be the case but it is not. I was born in the Panhandle-belt and have lived for some time in the Foothills district of Alberta; always I have been associated with real and synthetic cowboys and breathed the very air of corrals and stock-saddles. It should be in my blood and come instinctively but it isn't. I just never will be a *real* cowboy!

It does not matter how good a horseman, stockman or all-around westerner a person is, there are certain characteristics one must have besides these to really qualify as a cowboy, waddy, dude wrangler or whatever trade name you wish to put on a westerner.

There are westerners who have been born and raised in the most Zane Greyish parts of the west as have their fathers before them yet they never achieved the cowboy status required by many writers, dudes and movie-goers. No doubt they never had the desire to attain that status but the dudes must think it most unaccommodating to them. Visitors look for certain fulfilments on the part of cow-hands and they feel justifiably rooked when their expectations are not met with.

The average westerner feels a little guilty about it too, he does not like to let visitors down even if they are from the east or cities. However it can't be helped, things just naturally change, if not always for the best, even out west.

The days when we of the west sunburned the roof of our mouths from gaping every time we managed to get into a city are about over. The fast cars and radios started our liberation and the boys and girls joining up in the last war completed the emancipation. Westerners can now claim to be just as modernly dissipated as anyone else.

But to get back to cowboys, dyed-in-the-wool, hoss-ridin', rope-

swingin', spur-jinglin' cowboys. If I were a good picture man like Charlie Russell was, I could draw a picture of a real cowboy, but not being a painter or cartoonist it is difficult to know how to really give you the set up of a good cow-hand. It might be that the best way to inform you about a cowboy would be to tell you of all those features that I lack as a real cow-herder. Then by putting those shortcomings together you would have a well completed dude-wrangler.

Complete Cowboy's Requirements

To begin with it is accepted by and large by quarters outside the West, which feel that they know, that the hall-mark of a genuine cowboy is bowed legs. These bow-legs are, or should be, so well bowed as to leave no doubt as to their circuitousness. Their possessor should be absolutely unable to stop a blind pig in a narrow lane.

Well, I lose out right there on that prerequisite; I am not bow-legged. As a matter of fact I am a bit the opposite, being a little knock-kneed. There is no known remedy for that trouble; we are told that practice makes perfect but it is not always the case. I have most consistently and conscientiously striven to develop bow-legs and without any success whatever. They have been pampered towards bowishness and they have been almost brutally treated but they stubbornly refuse to foster a bow and even remain tipped toward each other like two old elders nodding to each other in church.

Many aids and remedies have been tried but all have failed. I have sat and eaten my meals while keeping a nail keg strapped between my legs; it never helped. I have walked on the outsides of my feet until

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Also watch for dates on Harness Horse races likely to be held in the latter part of May; also Auction Sale of Saddle Horses including Palominos, Quarter Horses, Halfbreds, Tennessee Walkers, to be held about the same time.

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Nanton, Alta.

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my ankles were ready to burst in protest, but that never helped either. Some say that cow milking is the best pattern setter for a good bow, if you always hold the pail between your knees, but it has never helped any in my case. Someone once advised me to wet them and then dry them out fast by a hot stove and warp them bowed. This I have never tried for it would be just my luck that they would warp the wrong way and make matters even worse than they are now. Someone else suggested holding a hundred pounds of flour on my shoulders for two hours every day, but that would be work and cowboys never work.

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NEVER A COWBOY (Continued from page 202)

If you are absolutely straight-limbed you get an even break, you can organize a bow, but being ever so little knock-kneed you are beat and can never develop a bow. That is the sad voice of experience talking.

Once many years ago at school we became involved in an argument about bow legs and one girl said that you were not bow-legged if you could hold a twenty-five cent piece between your knees; she could not have held anything smaller than a foot-ball herself. As for myself I could easily hold a postage stamp. As a lad I was always of a nervous nature and that no doubt accounts a good deal for my knock-knees. In my more excited or frightened moments my knees kept up such a violent, hither and yon relationship that they became permanently attracted to one another.

To the ranch where we once lived there at one time came an Irishman who had not long been in our fair country and the greatest part of his sojourn here had been spent in Ontario. He developed, as so many of his kind do, a keen desire to be a hero of the sagebrush saga and with swift and amazingly good results. His first bit of good fortune was to develop in no time a lovely set of bowed-legs. He bought a second-hand pair of riding boots which may have augmented his success, and very soon he could walk with beautiful cowboy poise. The heels of his boots wore off to look like wedges from his walking on gravelly ground, and thereafter took care of his gait for him. They tilted his legs at the right angle and tutored his bows without any further help from their proud possessor.

I used to watch him and almost weep with pure envy and frustration. It never seemed fair that an absolute foreigner to the west could attain such lovely bow-legs with such ease while I, a native son, was completely unsuccessful in my attempts.

Long ago the quest for bowed-legs was given up; I shall never become reconciled to it or feel that it is justly fair but it must be endured with such fortitude and good grace as I am able to bring forward. A good try was made and it was only due to a set of very strong-willed and somewhat knock-kneed legs that victory was not gained.

Following down to the pedal extremity we come to the next most important accoutrement of a cowboy and that is pigeon-toes.



T. T. TRIUMPHANT 10th-152210- Purchased at Denver Show, Jan. 1943, from Thornton Hereford Ranch, Gunnison, Colo. Price \$4500 U.S.

We have 10 Bulls entered in the Calgary Bull Sale, March 17-21, 1947

NAME AND NUMBER:

Britisher MRC 35th-184275-
Stanway Blanchard MRC 27th-187406-
Britisher MRC 38th-187408-
Beau Britisher MRC 8th-187422-
Britisher MRC 43rd-187429-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 16th-187431-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 19th-187444-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 23rd-187461-
Beau Britisher MRC 11th-187477-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 26th-187482-

NAME OF SIRE:

Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
Blanchard M Stanway 16th-136964-
Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
Britisher MRC 9th-147021-
Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-
Britisher MRC 9th-147021-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-

NAME OF DAM:

Divide M Dominette 16th-129112-
Blanche M Domino 5th-114892-
Belle Stephenson 42nd-114884-
Darling Mixer 28th-136958-
Lonely Valley Lass 10th-121544-
Miss M Stanway 14th-114857-
Miss M Stanway 8th-114828-
Lady Rancher Donald 33rd-80309-
Lonely Valley Lass 6th-121532-
Belle Stephenson 16th-103237-

Six Bulls entered in the Kamloops Bull Sale March 11, 12, 13, 1947

Britisher MRC 41st-187424-
Britisher MRC 44th-187430-
Britisher MRC 46th-187435-
Domino Seth MRC-187496-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 30th-187498-
Triumphant Blanchard MRC 31st-187499-

Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
Pine Coulee Britisher 17th-121466-
Royal Seth MRC-147821-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-
TT Triumphant 10th-152210-

Rancher Lady 11th-88598-
Faith M Blanchard 7th-136857-
Belle Stephenson 39th-114868-
Blanchard Lass 27th-82243-
Lady Blanchard 34th-80072-
Miss Prairie Rancher-92361-

The TRIUMPHANT BLANCHARD bulls are sired by TT TRIUMPHANT 10th, the bull which we purchased in Denver from the Thornton Hereford Ranch and which is a half brother to one of the bulls which sold for \$50,000.00 at the Denver Sale in 1945.

You will note that some of the bulls are sired by PINE COULEE BRITISHER 17th, a Campbell bull.

The McIntyre Ranching Co. Ltd.

LETHBRIDGE

ALBERTA

A cowboy must be pigeon-toed for many reasons but chiefly so that his spurs will not reach a deadlock when he wants to walk. Pigeon-toes are also necessary when riding a horse while wearing spurs; one cannot keep his spurs in the horses ribs all of the time and being other than pigeon-toed he would. You cannot keep your spurs in a horse's ribs all of the time because folks would never hear them jingle if you did.

If you are beginning to think at this point that being a cowboy is a small achievement, you just throw your weight onto your feet and try to stand pigeon-toed and bow-

legged at one and the same time. The old trick of rubbing your stomach and patting your head at the same time is mere child's play compared to the foregoing.

To get back to pigeon-toes, in my own case, I am at a loss in this also. I am so splay-footed that in a fresh fall of snow or with wet feet on a bathroom floor it looks as though two one-legged men were trying to go in opposite directions to one another. These feet were built to facilitate mountain climbing and puck stopping and to prevent the too swift descent of hills. It is next

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thing to impossible to climb a ladder with these feet; they are too large to enable them to fit heel to heel on the average ladder rung.

As with other abnormalities of this kind, little can be done to correct them and what is worse, nothing can be done to hide them. While they might be a great delight to a drill-sergeant they are much frowned at by the best in cattle circles,—and myself.

Some will say that the next requirement which we put down should be placed first but we feel otherwise; third place is about right. This requirement is the hand manufacture and proper smoking technique of cigarettes. It almost requires two distinct talents, one for making a cigarette and the other for smoking it in the proper manner.

Cigarette Rolling Technique

According to the best and oldest cowboy rules a good cigarette roller can roll one in a half minute flat with one hand, riding a horse which is either bucking or travelling at a fast gallop and using Bull Durham tobacco,—we mean the man, but of course the horse may use Bull Durham if he prefers it.

Nothing need be added to those rules, nothing in truth could be added. They have stood the test of time and strong men. If you are able to live up to this set of rules you are well on the way to becoming a good cowboy and the patriarchs of the range will welcome you to their midst.

In order to smoke a hand-rolled cigarette you run into a set of rather complicated and hard and fast rules if you perform the act Western style. You must be able to inhale and exhale smoke in great volume and in delicate mist like vapors also. You must be able to smoke your cigarette from the first puff to the last shred without ever removing it from your mouth. The veteran cowboy smoker can let a smoke hang on his lip, shift it from one corner of his mouth to the other with his tongue and keep up a running conversation about Palomino versus Arabian horses at one and the same time. While smoking with pleasure showing on his face like a contented bovine, he must be anticipating with even greater pleasure the next coffin nail that he is going to roll and smoke. When finished to the last drag the cigarette is tossed to the ground and pulverized to lifelessness with a well directed riding-boot. While so doing

a keen look of regret as at the burial of a dear friend must be manifest.

To roll a cigarette that would be recognizable as such I require the use of both hands, with one foot free to render aid in case of often encountered difficulties. No given amount of time is required; it must be limitless. Never ever have I been able to handle Bull Durham tobacco in anything but a pipe with a lid on it. Upon the very rare occasion of getting the stuff into paper my first act of inhaling brought the tobacco into my mouth and throat like a handful of coffee and thereafter chewing was the order of the day. Then too I never could quite master the nice little act of pulling the draw-strings of the little bags tight with my teeth.

In an attempt to send the smoke on a journey down my throat and wandering about through my lungs I at once send myself into a fit of violent coughing, sputtering, sneezing and whatever else seems inappropriate. Bystanders begin to slap me on the back as though I were a local politician who had at long last won an election. Afterwards my throat feels like a rasp had been swallowed part way and then whipped back in a hurry.



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- BLANCHARD DOMINO 4th
- W. S. BALDWIN 161st
- EXL DOMINO 37th

We invite you to look over our entries at this year's Bull Sales and our cattle at home.

ALEX A. MITCHELL
Lloydminster, Saskatchewan

ED. ANDERSON,
Herdsman

Trying to keep a cigarette in the mouth for any length of time whatever is most impossible for me. The smoke stings my eyes and invariably the paper glues down on my lip requiring almost a major amputation to remove it.

It is impossible for me to foster a love for cigarettes; every time I smoke one thanks are given that there is here no love for the dirty, smelly offensive little contaminants. Our feelings are mutual and unalterable. It is very enjoyable to watch others taking great pleasure from a cigarette but they are not for me.

Cowboy Poses

There are two characteristic cowboy poses that appear as standard on any advertisements which are dedicated to the cowboy-buying public; they are either a cowboy sitting on the very top rail of the home corral or sitting on his heels and propped against a corral post. They are true to life and very natural positions for a Westerner.

It does not take any acrobatic skill to sit on the old top rail on the big corral; therefore, that I am able to do with ease and even some comfort for not too long a time. With proper weather conditions and a good herd of beef cattle or calves to gaze down upon from that position we can at times become quite philosophic. It is a pleasant position from which or upon which to indulge in the ever pleasant past-time of doing nothing.

However the second pose, that of sitting on the heels, is altogether out of my field of talent. My legs are at fault once again; from the knees down my legs are unduly long and on that account my calves get sat upon instead of the heels. This causes the knee joints and muscles to swell, ache and protest in all manner of ways. It is downright uncomfortable and just cannot be managed. This too has been given up. When others do it a top rail must be sought and if one is not to be found at the place or moment the only reasonable thing left to do is to move off, no matter how enjoyable a conversation is being carried on at the time.

Some time ago art or culture came to walk arm in arm with us,—the rather culturally frugal and unpolished westerner, in a special form of music. At one time a cow-hand was thought to be good enough for any company if he could play a mouthorgan. It was not considered good taste to sing except at night to keep herds on

the open prairie quiet and contented.

However somewhere around the early part of the nineteen hundreds our midst must have been host to a mixture of Spanish, and French troubadours, Hawaiian Islanders and Alpine milkmen. Now to be a genuine cowboy one must be able to play any number of guitars, mandolins and banjos, sing with a nasal twang and yodel to the sub-stratosphere.

The proper cowboy song must be sad, in defiance of the theme of "Home On The Range", which states that out here one seldom hears a discouraging word. The real thing tells of much blood and battle, caved-in ribs or skulls, mothers who shall never again see wayward sons and pals who are buried just atop of the rise. The good cowboy singer can sing with such heart-rending pathos that upon hearing it a cast iron statute will shed ball-bearing tears.

Why there is so much sadness in cowboy songs we cannot imagine; as a general run we are a very happy-go-lucky, carefree lot out west. We deny having morbid minds. Someday we are going to find those who perpetrate this stigma about and upon us and force them at the point of a six-gun to sing a real happy, merry, and jovial ballad.

That is the way our attempts at music go though; a good guitar player is considered a better cowhand than a top calf-roper. In the event



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of a good yodeller all other shortcomings are forgiven and he is one of us for life.

For myself I have never tried any of the musical instruments. I sing when alone, so alone as only we can get away out here, and that is really alone. Once or twice a yodel has been striven at most valiantly but the best effort sounds not unlike a Listerine gargle and has much less soothing effects on the throat.

The crown of all true Westerners is, of course, that great and wonderful creation the Stetson, more often known as a "ten-gallon" hat. It is made by lesser peoples than John B. it is true, and why it is called a "ten-gallon" no living person could tell you but it is so. It is made and worn in a great variety of sizes, styles and colors. It is capable of swelling to the size large enough to accommodate any aspirant; possibly it is also capable of shrinking to its original size. This is not known as there is seldom occasion for it to do so. A band is a most necessary embellishment to it and is made of russet leather, braided leather or a rattle-snake skin.

The "ten-gallon" is worn with pride and doffed with vigor and courtesy. The proud possessor will wear it wherever he goes regardless of weather or occasion; he feels it is as much in place with cowboy-kings as with a dress suit. The poor

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New Rules for Regina Bull Sale

By C. E. BEVERIDGE, *Secretary*

FOR many years Bang's Disease in cattle has come up for discussion at the Annual Meeting of the Saskatchewan Cattle Breeders' Association but until this year nothing much has been done about it.

This year at their Annual Meeting held January 22nd in the Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon, by unanimous vote a motion was passed that if this disease was to be stamped out that all purebred herds must be clean, therefore, that it would be a requirement for the 1948 spring sale that all animals offered for sale have a Bang's free Certificate issued within thirty days of the sale.

For the 1947 sale however, as entry forms and rules and regulations were out it was felt that the regulations could not be made compulsory. However, the Secretary stated many had asked that arrangements be made to have blood samples taken after the animals come to Regina. The Secretary was instructed to make arrangements to have blood samples taken for those animals that could get in before Sunday noon, March 23rd, and to circularize all contributors to this effect pointing out however, that this year it was not compulsory but only on a voluntary basis. A dollar per head is to be charged for this service.

It was also decided at the Annual Meeting to have only males at the 1948 Spring Sale and to hold a female Sale in the fall of 1947.

In the past culling at the Spring Sale has been done by a secret committee that did not always remain secret. Previous to 1946 the contributors were allowed to take their culled animals home. At the 1946 Sale all culled animals were sold for slaughter.

A motion was passed at the Annual Meeting to hire an outside man to do the culling; that each animal so culled be marked with the letter "C" and immediately removed from the barns to the Stock Yards.

To many, these may seem to be drastic regulations. The interesting point this year was that these motions were passed by unanimous vote. Many pointed out that if we were going to maintain the quality of our cattle, sub-standard purebreds must go. The same and others also pointed out that it was essential that our seed stock be free from disease. I think most thinking livestock people will recognize these as progressive steps.

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unoffensive "ten-gallon" is beaten and whipped into all manner of shapes but regardless it is almost indestructible.

Your qualified cow-hand will admit to very little book-learning. It is almost sacrilege to have gone beyond the fourth grade. The Duke of Marlborough declared his knowledge of English history to be only that which he knew from seeing William Shakespeare's plays. Likewise the cowboy knows only of American (western) history that which he has gleaned from reading Zane Grey,

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UNION STOCKYARDS, ST. BONIFACE, MAN.

"Good Sires are Your Greatest Assets"

Clarence E. Mulford or Peter B. Kyne.

Not to be counted at all erudite the Westerner is none the less a romantic soul—One of the truly romantic groups of folk left in this prosaic old world. A newly-inducted cowboy is one of the lone surviving people individualistic enough to wear the clothes he prefers and act in a manner befitting his new calling. If he feels like wearing riding-boots, fancy shirt, tight pants and a Stetson hat to town or city on Saturday night, he by all means wears them, regardless of the noise his high heels make on the sidewalk.

Old West Remains

It is not true; the old West or its good old days have not passed nor are they passing. You will find just as many of the above described persons out here, in fact more, than there used to be. The crop is both perennial and annual for every so often we are favoured with a new crop and the old ones never die, they never even fade away. With little or no cost to us we have been given wonderful advertising in the past by such heroes as Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Hoot Gibson and many, many others of their calling. With their aid our land is ever green with candidates—oh ever green!

There are still cow-towns out in the Great West; the livery stables are not to be found in them now but their memory lingers on. The movie theatre is now the chief custodian of our lore, after the cowboys, of course, but they work in a very co-operative way.

Now, after all that has been said about cowboys, anyone should be quite able to recognize one the very minute he sets eyes on him. Even without having one portrayed for your guidance it is very possible that you would at once know the character upon seeing one. They are generally so noticeable and so out-

standing in their own way that there is no mistaking them. Then too, as one is looking for them out here it makes it a great deal easier to spot them.

However, if you fail to recognize the real cowboy upon first seeing one, have no fear; in very short order and with almost no other inducement than his own loyalty to his calling he will inform you at great length that he is a cowboy. The shorter time he has been a cowboy the more he will talk and can talk about it. A six-months to a year-and-a-half cow-hand can give you more information about the business than an oldtimer at the game can or would in a year's trail riding. These lads, (some unkind folks refer to them as tenderfeet), fairly exude cowboy lore. The west and its more picturesque sides are the very air they breathe and they have an almost crusading desire to present the whole story to everyone they come in contact with. In particular they wish to give their own relationship to the great drama a wonderful build-up. They feel great pity for any poor soul who does not share their way of life, and, in as charitable a way as they can, they tell him so. It is impossible for them to understand why anyone can tolerate any other way of living.

This then is your, and my, friend, the cowboy. He is a wonderful concoction and a fine contribution to the many kinds which we are told go toward making up a world. Some say they could not get along without them while others feel that they would at least like to try. In any event, he is here and here to stay and like many other things in life we must get along with him as best we can. The good old cowboy cannot be ignored so we must co-operate with him and even in time come to love him.