

The Association in the Early Days

By R. G. MATHEWS, 3516 Norton Ave., Everett, Washington

IT was in the Fall of 1896 that Stockmen from all over what is now known as southern Alberta, but which at that time was the SW Corner of the North west Territory, gathered together in the old Town of Macleod, with the result that the Western Stock Growers' Association was organized. The majority of the early members hailed from the South although there were a few from the Red Deer country, and one or two from the Maple Creek District. D. W. Marsh of Calgary was the first President and the writer of this little sketch was the first Secretary. Mr. Marsh served for several years and was followed by Wm. F. Cochran of the Cochrane Rancho Co. and he by D. H. Andrews of the Canada Land and Ranch Co. of Crane Lake, and he in turn by Walter Huckvale of Medicine Hat who was President at the time of my resignation which was, I think, in 1908; I say, I think, because I am speaking from memory most of the early records of the Association having been destroyed in a fire many years ago.

Very few of the men who were prominent in the Association's early affairs are with us today. They included amongst others, Pat Burns, W. R. Hull, R. G. Robinson, A. E. Cross, McHugh Bros., Col. Walker, and George Lane of Calgary; Archie McLean of the C. Y. Ranch, Grassy Lake; Howell Harris and Tom Currie of the Circle Cattle Co., and Tom Brown and McIntyre of Lethbridge; Fred Stimson, Geo. Emerson, A. H. Eckford, Mutiny Fleming and Beddingfield of High River; A. E. Springett of the Oxley Rancho and A. B. Macdonald of the 44 Ranch; C. Sharples of the "Winder," W. Lyndon, Ed. Dawson, Billy Hyde and Sam DeRinzy of The Trefoil Ranch; Maunsell Bros., Jim Bell, Bob Patterson, Joe McFarlane, Leeds and Elliott, Johnnie Franklin and Billy Metcalf of the Macleod district and H. M. Hatfield, C. Kettles, John Herron, A. M. Mordem, Lynch-Staunton and A. R. Duthie of Pincher Creek and Dr. McEachern and Dave Warnock of the Walrond Ranch; together with a contingent from Medicine Hat and Maple Creek which included Walter Huckvale, Tony Day and J. H. G. Bray of the

former District and D. F. Wylie of the latter.

J. C. (Jim) Patterson was employed for a number of years as the Association's Inspector. Jim had spent his young days on the Ranges of Texas and was, if ever there was one, an expert in the "Cow" business, and I naturally got very well acquainted with him. It seemed as though he was personally acquainted with every Range animal. I remember one occasion when he and I were looking through a herd of some 2000 head of mixed cattle that I suddenly heard him shout "Well! I'll be gol-darned if thar ain't old Emma", and he pointed to a cow's head sticking up from the middle of the sea of milling cattle some fifty yards away. He explained later on that "Emma" was an old friend from his former Cochrane Rancho days some years previously.

And, while on the subject of Jim, I like to think of an occasion when I persuaded him to accompany me to church one Sunday in Macleod. Jim wasn't much of a church-goer and he sat through the service like a fish out of water until the collection plate came round and then he stood up and produced a rough looking piece of rock which he placed in the plate explaining in a loud voice, "Saskatchewan gold, the pure McCoy", and took his seat smiling. He confided to me in a hoarse whisper, audible to everybody in the church, where the nugget was from.

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It happened that during the whole time that I was the Association's Secretary, I was also the Government Stock Inspector for the Macleod District which included the shipping corrals at Macleod, Pearce (where the Cochrane beef was shipped), and Peigan (which handled the Maunsell Bros. shipments), with an occasional trip to Cayley, Claresholm and Pincher Creek. Maunsells sold a lot of their beef to the Burns Co., and it was quite the usual thing for Pat Burns himself to journey down to the Peigan Corrals and lend a hand in cutting out the Beef, and any stranger happening by at such a

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time (a most improbable event in those days and at that location) might properly wonder who the Dickens was the stoutish, middle-aged gentleman careening around through the herd of milling steers, all decked out in a blue-serge business suit without any trace of the usual Range trappings. But that was Pat Burns: always prepared, ready to climb out of the saddle and step right into the Ranchmen's Club at any time, or vice-versa.

Rustlers

The construction of the Crow's Nest Pass branch of the C.P.R. was proceeding during the late nineties, and with conditions as they were then—the whole country south of the Main Line was given over entirely to the Range business—the stock-rustling fraternity gave the Stock Association and the N.W.M.P. many a headache. The opportunity existed for rustlers to run in some other fellows' cattle to be absorbed by the Construction gangs operating through the Pass. It was, therefore,

for the purpose of checking conditions that an inspection of the camps of the several beef contractors was considered desirable. An Inspector from the Montana Stock Association was detailed to accompany John Lamar, Foreman of the Walrond Ranch, and myself in an inspecting trip through the Pass. We left Macleod on horseback with the F. W. Godsall Ranch on the South Fork of the Old Man as our first overnight objective. It was dark by the time we arrived in the vicinity of the Ranch and we found ourselves riding around inside a large pasture, unable to find the road down to the Ranch house in the dark, until, fortunately, we ran across Godsall himself. He was expecting us, and had ridden out to look for us. As we were preparing to retire after dinner, Godsall produced a bottle of Scotch and starting with Lamar, asked him if he would have a night-cap.

No, thanks, said John, in his soft Texan drawl, "I never wear one."

John and I were billeted for the same bed which was tight up in a corner of a small room and I was slated to occupy the inside track. I crawled in and while waiting for him to "douse the glim", my equilibrium was somewhat upset to see him first haul out a long, wicked-looking gun which he placed under his pillow with the muzzle pointing my way. However, John and the gun and I passed a peaceful and uneventful night and next morning, together with our Stock Association friend from Montana rode on into the Pass and started our inspecting operations.

I don't remember how many camps we called on nor how many hides we examined, but there were a lot and we were a tired trio by the time we arrived at the Crow's Nest Lake where the Headquarters Construction Camp was situated and where we camped for the night—guests of the N.W.M.P. (they were not Royal in those days, just plain northwest)

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ASSOCIATION

(Continued from page 201)

Detachment which was over-seeing construction operations with Inspector G. Sanders in charge (now Colonel Sanders, C.M.G., D.S.O. retired and living in Calgary). We arrived back in Macleod in due course, and while, to the best of my recollection, we didn't find any improper hides, the trip had no doubt a salutary affect generally.

There was one incident about this time which had a satisfactory conclusion from the Stock Association's point of view when a man named Johnson was found guilty of cattle stealing and sent to the penitentiary. Johnson branded with a Circle around each hip-bone and was known generally as "Hippo" Johnson. He had been running a butcher shop in Macleod when he aroused the suspicions of the Stock Association and a detective was employed with the results stated.

There was another incident which had occurred some years previously. Two men were up for trial; one for killing a steer and the other for killing a man. They were both found guilty and the same sentence was meted out to each of them—7 years in the Penitentiary—which gives

some idea of the relative values placed on a man and a steer in those days, although it is only fair to explain that the man-killing episode was the result of a gambling fight and not a deliberate murder.

The meetings of the Association's Executive Committee which took place from time to time during the year, usually in Macleod, always attracted a gathering of Ranch Foremen and it was a privilege to have the opportunity of visiting with a crowd of that description: men like Patterson, Lamar, and "Black" Duthie of the Alberta Ranch and Sharples of the Winder and Johnson of the Oxley and those Broncho Busters supreme, Johnny Franklin and Billy Stewart. There was one such occasion when the Committee having adjourned its meeting, a number of us were standing and talking together out on Macleod's Main Street; when Sharples, (of the Winder) suddenly decided to go home. He mounted his trusty steed and scorning the usual road turned directly northward and raced over the Cut-bank, (which with the Old Man River below is the North boundary of Macleod) down into the River fully 100 feet below—swam on across and disappeared homewards

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in a cloud of dust, neither he nor his horse apparently the least upset. I happened to be standing next to Inspector Hercules Olivier of the N.W.M.P.—who had recently arrived from Montreal—and who was not accustomed to those sort of proceedings. It is no exaggeration to say that he stood pop-eyed and speechless as Sharples disappeared over the Cut-bank.

And still another incident crops up in my memory with Sharples as the star performer. He arrived in Macleod one day with a mowing machine needing repairs. It was drawn by a team of horses and Sharples sat on the elevated seat and drove. The repairs were com-



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pleted in due course and shortly after, the Main Street, comparable in those days in its small town way to the rocky Road to Dublin, was treated to a regular grand-stand spectacle when Sharples with his team of horses and his mowing machine came speeding along on the dead gallop. He was hanging on by the skin of his teeth and the machine was bouncing and rattling behind the scared horses. Right down the street they went, swinging round the Customs House and out onto the Calgary Trail. We expected him to be brought back with everything in pieces, including himself, but he wasn't, so we concluded he had a pretty tough mowing machine.

Absence, it is said, makes the heart grow fonder, so I ought to be on the verge of having palpitations, for I have been away for over 25 years. I have, however, during that time kept in touch with "things Albertan" and have observed from time to time the published doings of the Western Stock Growers' Association. Realizing that half a century has elapsed since the Association started on its useful career and that it is still going strong, I venture to speak for the men who did the original spade-work that brought it into existence and who are

not here to speak for themselves, and to congratulate those who are today carrying on and to join them in celebrating the completion of the Association's first fifty years.

Dr. Auld Retires

Dr. F. H. Auld, with Saskatchewan's Department of Agriculture since 1906 and its Deputy Minister for the last 30 years has retired.

In the words of Agriculture Minister Nollet spoken at a farewell banquet for Dr. Auld, "You have seen tremendous changes in Saskatchewan agriculture during your 40 years of public service in the West."

Dr. Auld, born in Gove Head, P.E.I. in 1881, came to Saskatchewan in 1900 and settled in the Abernethy district, where he met the late W. R. Motherwell. Dr. Auld joined the dairy branch of Dr. Motherwell's agriculture department of the newly formed Saskatchewan government in 1906. In 1907 he was appointed to the provincial Bureau of Statistics and Information and in 1910 left the government to organize the agricultural extension service of the University of Saskatchewan. In 1914 he returned to the agriculture department and in 1916 became deputy minister.

New Cattle Disease

A new and destructive cattle disease is sweeping herds in New York state. Dr. W. A. Hagan, Dean of New York State Veterinary College says the epidemic

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is known only as "X-disease" and there is no known cure. The X-disease has been prevalent for the past 5-years, and has resulted in a mortality rate from 6% to 8%, and in some cases, whole herds have had to be slaughtered as a result of the infection. Dr. Hagan says the strange disease has odd manifestations affecting the mucous membranes of the tongue and digestive tract, as well as the liver and kidneys of cattle.

Hoof and Mouth Disease

The United States Agriculture Department has recently accepted a joint commission report urging co-operation between Mexican and American authorities to wipe out hoof and mouth disease in Mexico. The American-Mexican joint commission states that the disease has become so widespread in Mexico it represents a grave danger to the livestock industries of Mexico, the United States, and other countries.



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