

REVIEWS:

KAMLOOPS CATTLEMEN: One Hundred Years of Trail Dust.

T. Alex Bulman. Grey's Publishing Ltd., 1972. Pp. 183, maps, illus., \$7.95.

Information on the central interior of British Columbia has begun to emerge over the past few years and consequently, Kamloops Cattlemen comes as a most welcome publication. The author himself is a well known cattleman, as was his father before him, and has written an excellent and most readable account of ranching in the Kamloops area.

In the introduction, the origin of the cattle frontier and the founding of the province's largest ranches, such as the Gang and Douglas Lake Ranch, are described in detail for the first time. With the major ranches and their founding personalities in perspective, the author remarks on his father's entry into the livestock business in 1887. Although the title implies a wider orientation, most of the book deals with the father's rise to prominence as a cattleman, and with the author's own life on the family's ranch. The story of the Circle J's development, until the father's death in 1935 and continuing under the leadership of the author until quite recently, is portrayed through a series of short narratives each addressing itself to some aspect of early ranch life. Topics such as the problems associated with isolationism, the role played by women on the frontier, climatic physiographic hazards, repercussions of the depression years, the introduction of mechanization, and various personalities are viewed largely in the context of the family's expanding property. The author's greatest strength, however, emerges when he examines the values and attitudes of "those pioneer cattlemen who built the foundation of the industry"; attitudes and values still evident in many interior communities. Alex Bulman's life-long familiarity with cattle and cattlemen has enabled him to recall and describe life, as it occurs in a ranching community, with an insight seldom found in such accounts. His well written descriptions are certain to capture the fascination of even the most casual reader.

Like most books focusing on a relatively small area, Kamloops Cattlemen almost of necessity, uses a myriad of local place names. Fortunately for readers who may find this somewhat distracting, the author has included a map which can be easily referred to for orientation.

In Kamloops Cattlemen, the ranching frontier is described in a modest yet most fascinating way and will undoubtedly encourage others to take up the challenge for further research. To Alex Bulman, credit and praise is certainly due.

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