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Review of Prince Charming Goes West: The Story of the E. P. Ranch.

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Prince Charming Goes West: The Story of the E. P. Ranch. By Simon Evans. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1993. Illustrations, maps, figures, introduction, epilogue, appendix, bibliography, index. xii + 219 pp. \$18.95 paper.

This book is a history of the E. P. (Edward Prince) Ranch intertwined with a selective biography of H. R. H. Edward Windsor (Prince of Wales, King Edward VIII, Duke of Windsor) during the forty-three years he owned the

property. Edward arranged for the purchase of the ranch after a visit to the Pekisko Creek district in the beautiful foothills of the Rocky Mountains' front ranges of southern Alberta in 1919. The author discusses Edward's motives for acquiring and retaining the 1440 acres and additional leased land and identifies the evolving management strategies and personnel connected with the ranch. In the 1920s the enterprise became a breeding ranch of international importance for pedigree livestock imported from Edward's prize-winning animals on his Duchy of Cornwall estates. In the depressed 1930s the ranch was downscaled to save money. During World War II exploration (unsuccessful) for oil was undertaken. In 1950-1954 the acreage became a small-scale cow-calf commercial ranch. From 1956 to 1961 a group of friendly investors created the E. P. Ranch Company, Ltd. and the enterprise again became a breeding farm for pedigree stock, prior to its sale in 1962. Edward left most decisions to his advisors but kept in close touch with the ranch which operated at a small loss (\$2000 to \$5000) each year.

Initially, Edward was attracted to the Alberta ranchers' vigorous western spirit—so different from the kind of society he knew. He saw the ranch as a get-away from prince-

ly pressures and his father's criticisms; moreover, it was a symbol of a new and exciting relationship he hoped to form with the peoples of the emerging Commonwealth of Nations. He also enjoyed hunting, riding, and outdoor work among the ranching people. As the years passed, however, he developed other interests and experienced the difficult problems of his finances, changing royal position, familial and marital status, aging, and health. His interest in the ranch survived but declined, as evidenced by the small number of his brief visits (1923, 1924, 1927, 1941, 1950) to the property.

With an excellent background of practical and scholarly training and relevant publications, Simon Evans, professor of geography at Memorial University of Newfoundland, has written a thoroughly researched and interesting study of the changing fortunes of the ranch and its royal owner. Future researchers may wish to compare this ranch with case studies of other livestock operations in southern Alberta and identify specific linkages between Edward's undertakings on the ranch with those on his Cornwall estates.

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