

GUY WEADICK

He was called "Mr. Stampede" long before there were press agents or organized campaigns to elect and confer those doubtful titles such as Miss Electric Light Bulb or The Pickle Queen. Guy Weadick was given this title by the little fellow on the Calgary streets. "Greats" came to visit his Calgary Stampede and also recognized his flair for showmanship.

Charlie Russell, probably the West's greatest artist (certainly at present, it's highest priced) not only wrote him a complimentary letter but drew him a sketch. I remember seeing this hanging on the walls of the dude ranch that Guy operated in the Highwoods after his forced retirement as Director of Calgary's Stampede in 1916. It read:

" Friend Guy

I received your letters an am a little slow about coming back with paper talk. But here goes I am glad to here you are going to pull another contest for the folks Those prizes your haning up shure look good. But judging from horses and steers you delt out at Calgary and Winnipeg the rider or roper that takes a prize sure has something coming I have lived among riders most of my life and late years Iv been taking in contests at different places but yours has got them all skined to the dew claws An Il take my hat off to aney rider who takes or tryes to drag a proze from you An Injun once told me that bravery came from the hart not the head. If my red brother is right Bronk riders and bull dogers are all hart not the head. If my red brother is right Bronk riders and bull dogers are all hart above the wast band but is a good bet ttheres nothing under there but hafr.

well Guy I hope you git a cross all right and show them Cliff dwelers thez real thing they have all seen wild west shows but yours is no show its a contest where horses and riders are strangers its easy when a bronk twister knows every jump in a hoss but hes gambling when he steps across one he never saw before you savy

well guy I close with best regards tp your selfeYend @rrend Your friend

and Wife

C M Russell"

The world's greatest western movie idol of the early 20's. Hoot Gibson, became his close friend and made a Canadian movie at his ranch and even royalty, the popular Prince of Wales, sent him an autographed photo. He entertained such diverse personalities as Peter B. Kyne, Irvin Cobb and Helen Keller. A fine arts professor at an American university quoted him as an authority in showmanship. Guy was an anachronism. Born in [redacted] he started a carefree career as a tough hard-riding cowboy. When the open-range disappeared he refused to learn to plough or file for a homestead. Therefore he found himself without a job. A plighted modern man often finds himself in whom automation has displaced him. He and his ilk drifted into the only compatible job they could find,--the wild west travelling show. Guy went to work for the famous Buffalo Bill shows and their American tour married Flores La Due. She was quite a gal. In her day she was as famous as their other star, Annie Oakley, only Rogers and Hammerstein unfortunately did not choose her as the theme for a musical and so she was not frozen into fame's rigid frame. She had, however, acquired fame. She and Guy decided to break with big shows and try a European tour. After all Europe had loved Buffalo Bill; true his troop had come home with only medals and jewels and no hard cash but at least they had been doing the job they enjoyed and were trained for..

The Weadick's tour was a success. In Paris Guy accepted a dare to take his horse to the top of the Eiffel tower. Any modern tourist will tell you that's a "swaying venture". Guy, after it was all over, was to say, "the horse didn't seem to mind it a bit", but he found it a little scary! While in Paris he was also challenged to a sophisticated but deadly French duel by a barber he made fun of for charging what he thought was too much for a shave. In those days it was 80 cents, but since Guy was only getting that much an hour for bucking horses, he was outraged and many a modern westerner now understands his anger. The duel never came off. I suspect if it had been with sabres, as the French group were holding out for, Calgary might never have had a "Mr. Stampede" and the Westerners offer to settle it with fisticuffs was only met with stony silence. After their successful European tour, he became agent for a stampede performer billed as Nigger Pickett and was able to interest the Fair Board in retaining his services. When Guy and his wife got to Calgary they suddenly felt at home. Calgary was a western boom town. Its rancher millionaires were happily building imitation European castles and at the same time working hard at developing the greatest wheat and cattle the world would ever see. Here were men he could talk to and hope to be understood. There were

Pat Burns, and George Lane both ranchers and Cross, the brewer whose family had also organized early the RCMP who had policed the Western plains. He persuaded these men they should invest their money and bring a new type of show to Alberta.

Up until then, at Calgary, they had held a country fair that was an imitation of the ones European countries had evolved through the centuries. Guy proposed a new and unique feature, why not combine the travelling wild west show with a county fair and call this new concept a Stampede. Fortunately for Calgary, our wealthy individuals were able to grasp this new concept and they hired Guy to produce it. He wrote his old friends the boys and girls who had been riding in the wild west travelling shows and he unearthed on the Indian reserves and the nearby ranches new and young horsemen. His wife also ably assisted him. From a feminine point of view, it's interesting to remember that these early cowgirl performers didn't drink, smoke or have the vote and even had to ride the broncs ~~in a divided skirt~~ in a divided skirt, but even with these handicaps Weadick's wife was able to thrill these earlier audiences and bring them to their feet in a standing ovation. She and her compatriots, the early cowgirls appeared in the first three Stampedes but finally one lady was kicked off a bronc and broke her back and now no woman appears as a contestant in any Stampede event. But it was their gallant assistance that introduced this new concept of entertainment to the world.

The success of the Stampede he had organized was to outgrow Guy. As the citizens of Calgary got behind it with letters written by the women's clubs of Calgary and by active participation on the part of its citizens by each wearing a five-gallon Western hat, the Stampede popularity grew and the large production required now business men with administrative ability to direct it. A group of these men drifted into the Stampede organization and to them Guy Weadick's weaknesses were very evident. Finally, Guy himself gave them the grounds for firing him. He overdid it and his performance on the stage and radio enraged strait-laced citizens and justified his firing. Shortly thereafter the first Mrs. Weadick died and Guy remarried and he and his wife bought the TS ranch just west of that delightful western town, High River. In the town held a Guy Weadick day, when they discovered that Guy and his wife, now in failing health, felt they had to leave Alberta for the sun of Arizona. They invited the great performers. that in the past he had personally introduced to our western plains and they raised a purse of \$10,000 which they gave him

as a gift. This money represented both guilt and gratitude payments for the man who had brought to the world a new form of entertainment. The Wild West shows were to disappear into side-shows and midways but the Stampede which he had conceived in Calgary was to become an accepted form of entertainment across the entire world. Now Boy Scout troops in all of North America and children in Little Britches rodeos hold stampedes. Over 20 American universities annually put on a Stampede and thousands of North American cities annually hold a Stampede that is copied from the original one that "Mr. Stampede" held in Calgary.

Guy Weadick died at the age of 66 in Pheonix, Arizona. He had been writing ~~xxxx~~ immediately prior to his death "A History of Stampedes and Rodeos Covering a Span of 58 years."

His friend the great bowboy artist C.M. Russell once wrote of him:

Here's hoping your trail is a long one  
Plain and easy to ride,  
May your dry camps be few  
And health ride with you  
To the pass on the Big Divide."

Guy Weadick ~ I

He was like many a man of today, he felt that life was moving on without him. Untrained for another job without schooling he knew his job was vanishing from the world he lived in. Naturally, it bothered him and sometimes irritated him but he tenaciously hung on determined to hold his job and carry on the best of the world he had known which was the age of Buffalo Bill ~~into the world he had to live in.~~ His name was Guy Weadick.

Stampede board

New Bill trophy in  
memory of Guy Weadick  
can I photograph it

1000 mule rides coming  
this year?

Anything unique

Old timer hit?