

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

November 13th

19 29

To C. Gardner Sullivan

From Mrs. Reeve

RE: -- CATTLE

In calling your attention to my novel, CATTLE, may I set down, for your information and reference, several matters in connection with the novel?

1. It should not be considered in the class with the ordinary western picture. It would make a Super-Western.
2. There is no company so well outfitted to do a special story of this sort, as Universal.
3. The tremendous success of THE VIRGINIAN and IN OLD ARIZONA brings home the fact that big western pictures are certain to go across with great success. Len Fields has said that CATTLE would make an epic picture.
4. The novel was published in 1924. No sooner was it out than nearly every motion picture company negotiated with my agents in New York for the purchase of this novel. At that time I was living on a ranch in northwestern Canada. Harry Carr, then scenario editor for D.W. Griffith, wrote me in Alberta and gave his opinion that CATTLE was the greatest outdoor novel he had ever read. This he has repeated several times in his column in The Los Angeles Times, "The Lancer." Elmer Clifton was at that time associated with D. W. Griffith. He made the trip to Alberta -- a six day's journey from New York -- especially to see me and he bought the rights to CATTLE. For years he held the property at a prohibitive figure, but I know now that it could be bought at a reasonable price and at a very nominal figure, in fact, if Clifton, who is crazy about it, were allowed to direct or be associated in the production.

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5. The novel had a large sale and is still issued each year. The London Times referred to it as a Canadian "Tess of the D'Urbervilles". It was reviewed enthusiastically by such critics as Menken and Charles J. Finger, who ordinarily do not notice current fiction. Mr. Finger compared it with the work of Ruth Suchow and the stories of the Russian modernists.

We have in our files an excellent synopsis and you will note, from the comments of the reader, how strongly she recommended this story. I might say in passing, that I was not at that time in the employ of Universal, but was out in the northwest of Canada.