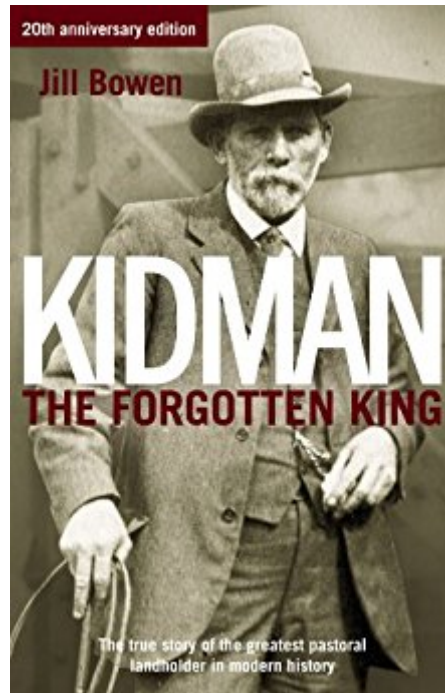




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Kidman The Forgotten King



Synopsis

the true story of the greatest pastoral landholder in modern history As a barely literate youth of thirteen, Sidney Kidman ran away from home and worked as an odd-job boy in a grog shanty in outback Australia. He went on to become the greatest pastoral landholder in modern history, acquiring a legendary reputation both at home and abroad as the Cattle King. Kidman was much more than a grazier. In addition to his many successful business ventures and his contributions to the war effort, he was driven by a grand plan for the remote arid areas of Australia. this kept him locked in a battle with the land - and against drought. Wealth, power, fame and honours did not change Sidney Kidman. He remained the homespun, gregarious bushman for whom men worked with an almost savage loyalty. Greatly admired, he also had many enemies, and in his later years was dogged by controversies and untruths. this book explores the fascinating Kidman legend, and gives a balanced, thoroughly entertaining account of this larger-than-life Australian and his exceptional achievements. 'An addictive read, embracing the romance of the bush and the hardship of the outback.' SUNDAY TIMES

Book Information

File Size: 2535 KB

Print Length: 544 pages

Publisher: 4th Estate (March 1, 2010)

Publication Date: March 1, 2010

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003EY7J6M

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #374,202 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #94

in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Australian #201 in Books >

History > Australia & Oceania > Australia & New Zealand #1695 in Books > Biographies &

Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Rich & Famous

Customer Reviews

This is the story of a truly great Australian. In fact a great man in any country! He is an example of what used to be the norm in this country. Self made, enthusiastic, strong of will and determination and absolutely fair to those whom he respected. Here was a wonderful dreamer who dreamed his dreams and then kicked them into extraordinary reality. Life to Sid was a ball and a pleasure just to be there. I suspect too many of his kind died in the 3 Wars that we fought on behalf of others. There were those even then who were the fore runners of the type people that we have now have in this country; whinging, wining, small minded, jealous and contemptible! The only good ones left are indeed in the Bush. Thank you Jill Bowen for setting the records straight.

Kidman's life story is very interesting. I didn't know who he was until I read an article in a magazine that led me to read "Kidman the Forgotten King". However the book, for me, got way too bogged down in details that were not that important to me and I usually like details. This book could have been shortened and made a lot more interesting to read I think. His life story would make a good mini series for TV.

Excellent True Story of a Great Australian. Sometimes the facts and figures were a bit tedious but generally I really enjoyed knowing more about this man who struggled against the drought and distances of the Australian Outback.

I rather enjoyed the book. I thought Jill Bowen went in depth to get the true facts, not what was imagined by Ion Iredess.

Sid Kidman's 70th birthday celebrations where the centre of Adelaide was just a crush of people, stopping cars and trams, may still be the biggest event based on percentage of population in any City in Australia ever, dwarfing the Beatles visits and Vietnam War protests. He was probably Australia's most important man of the 19th Century

Those who want to have an understanding of the pastoral history of Australia must acquaint themselves with the life and exploits of Sidney Kidman. This book gives a comprehensive account of his life (1857-1935), with copious detail of his transition from leaving home at 13 with just a few shillings and little education, to becoming the greatest landowner in the British Empire, with outright ownership of or major interest in some 65 million acres, with over 500,000 cattle and substantial

numbers of sheep and horses. The author's extensive research and many anecdotes provide a fascinating picture of Kidman's character, including his obsessive attention to detail, amazing memory, abhorrence of waste of money, and at the same time great generosity. The reader gets an intriguing insight into the challenges of running stock in country susceptible to prolonged drought, the ravages of dingos and rabbits, and devastating floods, all in the context of great distances with little infrastructure. Kidman's innovative schemes for dealing with some of these problems were remarkable. The book is not short on details of dates, distances, prices, banking and taxation, but I particularly enjoyed the author's use of the Australian vernacular -- for example, one of Kidman's senior employees is described as "a top man, but also a wily, cunning bastard." Travelling in the present-day Australian Outback becomes more meaningful as one sees the signposts pointing to "Kidman properties" -- Merty Merty, Mt Poole, Macumba, Anna Creek, Mungerannie, Newcastle Waters -- the list could go on and on. A valuable resource for students of the development of Australia.

Great biography of a fascinating and important figure in Australian history. If you've not heard of Kidman it's time you did.

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