



Up Front

A very long wait.
By C.J. Hadley

Everything was in good shape. Our new book “The Long Trail Home” (aka “Nippers & Oldies”) was loaded onto an Asian container ship named HMM Promise in late October. The printing plant was close to the border of North and South Korea and on a good day the workers in “the free democratic Republic” in the south could almost wave at Kim Jong-un’s communist troops loitering along the DMZ to the north.

Promise arrived in Long Beach on November 5, which meant we could ship out hundreds of preordered books before Thanksgiving and in plenty of time for Christmas. But then we waited, and waited, and waited, as hundreds of similar vessels that crossed the Pacific to reach the American market backed up and floated within sight of Long Beach for close to two agonizing months.

We received our beautiful books on January 5 and started mailing copies that day—even though it was our U.S. printer’s deadline for this Spring 2022 issue. It was a tough time.

Brian Ridgway, from Grand Rapids, Mich., was patiently waiting for his copy. “Just curious,” he asked, “why use an overseas printer? I have done quite a bit of publishing and printing and know that the full-color, larger scale presses were limited. I know that 10-15 years ago, there were supposed to be only four active in the world: one was in Canada and

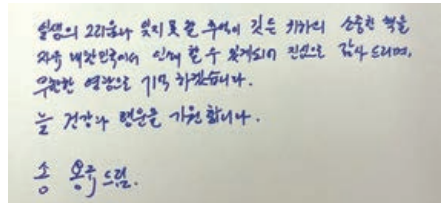
another in China somewhere. I know the Chinese can do a quality job, but with all the expected delays and the problems this administration is creating for everyone—from manufacturing to shipping—I can imagine we’re in for a difficult three more years.”

Kari wrote via email: “I don’t know about your other subscribers, but I’d be more than happy to spend more money if I knew the books were published on American soil.”

My answer to both was simple. Cost. I fired China last year but can’t afford to print a book in the U.S.A. “The Long Trail Home” is our 17th gorgeous hardback, thanks to RANGE and the Range Conservation Foundation joining together to share stories, photos and illustrations about the good people



The HMM Promise, sitting off Long Beach early last winter, plus a note from our printer: “We are pleased to print for you in the free democratic Republic of South Korea. Sincerely, Alfred Song.”



and critters of western ranching. Seven of these books won national awards. I could not have produced any if I had to print in the United States.

At one low point, I wanted to rent a boat and take our books off the Promise but when you see that monster it’s obvious that enormous equipment and a talented crew are needed to unload a single container with up to 24,000 stacked on each ship, then separate them in a warehouse for truckers to deliver.

The price increase per book, U.S. versus Asia, can be 300 percent or more. I have cut the cord to the CCP but to get out more than 100,000 beautiful good-news hardback books sharing—by word and image—that ranchers are the good guys means I still have to go offshore. South Korea costs more than China and if RANGE ever gets rich we will pay the massive extra and print in America. But after 31 years of heavy labor on RANGE and still working close to the edge, that’s unlikely.

I sure hope you enjoy this book. (See page 81.) It took a lot of patience to get it here—mostly by the crew of the Promise. ■



In Fort Worth on Oct. 28, 2021, the Will Rogers Medallion Awards committee presented its first-ever Lifetime Achievement honor to RANGE magazine’s editor. It was definitely time for tears....