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Mountain men have been here 150 years

from J. A. Commins, president of the Mountain Cattle-men's Association of Victoria

It is now several weeks since an interesting article appeared in 'The Age' (19/11), that related to the early history and settlement of land now contained in the State of Victoria.

Writers quite frequently produce articles about the early settlement around Port Phillip Bay or Portland, but it is a rare thing to see reference to the pioneer cattle-

men who were quietly and unobtrusively exploring and settling in the eastern highlands of the region, at the same time as pioneers like Batman, Fawcner and the Hentys were establishing themselves on the mainland.

Several explorers are reported to have been in the Omeo district in 1834 and cattle were brought there early in 1835.

It must be a serious oversight in historical recording when men like the Buckleys, McFarlane, Livingstone and Pendergasts, and

others whose early pioneering efforts all predate the famous exploration of Major Thomas Mitchell in 1836, are not given more prominence.

Since the State of Victoria and mountain cattlemen are both commencing a 150-year anniversary, it would be appropriate if the exploits of these "founding fathers" and their associates were made better known for posterity's sake.

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Essay