

# Letters From Elmer, the Dude Ranch Student, to His "Paw"

## It's A Long Jump From His Hard Pan Home To Higher Education, Elmer Discovers

**D**UDE RANCHING as a four-year study has been instituted at the University of Wyoming. It's not impossible that other colleges and universities will follow suit, producing hosts of young men and women entitled to use the initials "B.D.R." on their calling cards to signify they're "Bachelors of Dude Ranching."

Here's a glimpse of what may be expected from Elmer's letters, as read over his shoulder . . .

By Gerald B. Burnett

**DEAR PAW:**

Ever since you red in the Powder River Pantagraph as how the University of Wyoming was giving a four year coarse in "Dude Ranching" and sent me down here to Laramie to get some



larnin on the subject so's we cud turn them 3000 achers of hard pan and boulder rocks into a incum perducin ranch instid of a govmint pension plan for rollin off every third rock you can bet I've bin doin some tall thinkin on the subjct.

Last summer when we was runnin around and proppin up them cows as hadn't laid down and died on account of bin so full of granite dust they couldn't move no further I was beginning to think that maybe the ranchin bizness wasn't all it was cracked up to be. But I made a discovery paw.

Down here they signed me up as a freshman, which is nothin like a fresh cow, but like a greenhorn or a dude on a ranch, well, down here they handed be a thing called a crickulum or somethin, which means like the orders you used to give out to the foreman when we had one and he used to copy em down in a book, that is if he was one of the writin kind.

Anyhow these orders call for a tall site of doins. Seems like they're goner teach us cowhands 39 subjects in the four years they aim to give this course. I can't tell you all about em in this letter on account of I can't read all the names yet. Yes sir, paw, I'm a goin to lern English composition and a thing called botinny which the head hand here says is all about flowers and such and another called agronomy which is to do with crops. Then they listed one which said "Anim. Prod." and I thot boy there's where I shine punchin them cattle up through the shoots but the foreman feller, they call em pefessers here, says no, thats where we

teaches you all the different kinds of farm animals.

Well then we got some more agronomy about farm mecanix which I suppose is how to start a 1911 lizzie at 20 below and some fizzical edication which has to do holdin a sick horses hed while you pour salts down him I reckon and some military trainin. Since we aint had to stand off the Indians except for some free meals since you was a boy I don't see what good that's agoin to be but I'll try. Well paw that's all fur now and I'll be a writin you all later.

Your lovin sun,  
ELMER.

**DEAR DAD:**

Well here we are back at dear old U. of W. all reddy, correction reddy, to begin our second year of recreational ranching. As I look back on my first year, or what I used to call the greenhorn class, I get a good hearty laugh. Yes sir, I certainly was a greenhorn and a dude at this business but I'm learnin, wait that orter have a g on it (and that other word should be ought to). See what freshman composition taught me already. Now us sophs, they call us two-year-olds sophmores dad, are heading into the winter corral and the feed racks are stuffed with such cherce, choyce, oh, let it go, morsels as chemistry and the breed history and judging of live stock and farm management and the good old standbys of physical ed. and mil. training.

But the one I'm looking forward to is public speaking. My faculty adviser says the ability to be a good public speaker is very important when you're handlin a pack of dudes. So you can be prepared to here the welkin ring, a welkin is nothin like a dinner bell paw, I mean dad, but is something like a echo I guess. Anyway I learned that out of a book too.

The chemistry ought to come in handy to test some of them water holes next year. Be kinda interesting to know what we been drinkin all these years don't you think. Or do you think maybe the shock would be too great? Looks like a big year pop, dad, I mean. Love to mom.

Your loving son,  
ELMER.

**DEAR OLD PATER:**

The class in dude ranching is not as large this year as it was last or the year before. Some of the boys and girls have given up and others were made to give up by irate fathers. You remember what Buck Hawkins' dad said when he came home last summer and began telling the old man how to feed his cattle scientifically. Someone should have written down that conversation, as the language of the old West is fast disappearing. And when we Bachelors of Science get out of here next year we're going to show some of those unprogressive old timers like old man Hawkins a thing or two about making ranches pay.

Why this year we are taking up agricultural economics and general dairying and range and ranch marketing and general poultry and meats on the one side. And we have a couple of honeys of new courses like psychology and zoology to balance up dry subjects like wool marketing and livestock production. Things will be humming around our place after next year, pater. All the boys are

calling their old man pater now, it is a Latin word meaning pop.)

And we have journalistic writing on the list too. That is so we can write pieces for the paper telling how good our ranch is and why the dudes should come there instead of over to the Hawk-inses. What a chance they'll have with Buck only knowing two years of how to ride herd on the dudes and me with psychology up my sleeve to be able to size up a dude and know wether he wants to hear about western bird and animal life or a good talk on the problems of the recreational rancher with human nutrition, institutional book-keeping and scientific cooking thrown in.

You bet, pater, the good old Double Cross ranch is going to be the leading center where paying guests are entertained in the Powder River country.

Well, Ethiopia, pater (that's Abyssinnia, "ah-be-seein ya" get it) in any language. Boy will the guests like repartee like that?

Yours respectfully,  
YOUR SON.

**DEAR GOVERNOR:**

As I near the end of my senior year at the university I cannot help but realize the great gulf that education has made between the life I used to lead on that heap of boulders we jokingly called a ranch and the man I am today. Within a few months I shall be a full-fledged Bachelor of Science with a diploma to prove it. And although it breaks my heart to do it governor, I must tell you that I am not coming home. How could I with my knowledge of psychology and zoology and Wyoming



history and general citizenship and contracts and sales and inst. org. and mgt. settle down in that mangy old cow country again?

You can understand, can you not, governor, that the lack of cultural and social contacts on the Double Cross, equal to those I have become accustomed to here with the varsity fellows, might cause me to become an unhappy introvert, a victim of my own misapplied psychological studies? No, I am not going to waste my ammunition on Powder River, governor, old boy.

Some of the fellows have been looking into the opportunities afforded by the cinema and a number are planning to go down to Hollywood where positions as technical advisers in the making of motion pictures depicting the outdoor life of the West should be available. I should not be surprised but what producers of screen plays would leap at the opportunity to secure a Bachelor of Science to direct their efforts.

So if you will keep up the usual monthly remittance for a few months after my graduation, dear governor, I am confident I can secure a position

## They're "Dudes" No Longer; Scholar Learns The Correct Term Is "Paying Guests"

worthy of my education and not only repay all the funds you have expended upon me but more beside. I will leave for Hollywood immediately after my graduation, governor, and you may expect a letter from me announcing my new position shortly thereafter.

Your son,  
E. SPENCER JONES.

(You see I have changed my name from Elmer to Spencer as it is more in keeping with my new position, but I still retain the E. for sentiment's sake.)

**DEAR POP:**

Your prodigal son is ready to come home. When you sent that last check and told me to graduate and then go out and learn something for myself I must have been a pretty disappointing sort of son to a swell old-timer like you. It only took me a week to make the rounds of the movie studios down here in Hollywood and then, with no more money, I had to go to work.

These fellows who ride in the Western movies all hang around the corner of Sunset boulevard and Gower street here in Hollywood and one night I was talking with some of them about a job and when I told them I was Elmer Jones, the son of old "Dad" Jones of the Double Cross they got interested right away. They told me to forget about being a bachelor of science and remember how to fork a bronc and they would get me a job for old times and your sake.

So I have been riding in "horse operas," pop, that's what they call them movies down here and I've got enough dinero in the money belt to come a high-tailin' home.

So you can be lookin for me any day now pop. I'm going to use some of that science of mine in not remaining a bachelor any longer, tell Mary Higgins that, and I'm going to take that South portion you offered me, where the boulders aint too big to be rolled away for a little clearing. And I'm going to start raising a dude ranch of my own.



Yes, sir, pop, I'm going to name the first one "Dude" Jones and my public speaking course will come in mighty handy tellin him and the rest all about the days when the West was still tame and not full up with wild Easterners.

Your lovin son,  
ELMER.

## Washington Courageous In Battle — But Timid In Affairs of the Heart

**O**NE OF the few battles that George Washington lost was the battle of love! And of all the engagements it was perhaps the one he most wanted to win.

In 1758, Washington delayed in New York, although Indians were burning and scalping along Virginia's frontiers. For the first time in his life he postponed duty in favor of a girl.

The girl was lovely Mary Phillips, whom he met several months before. She came of an aristocratic family, was wealthy, and in every way a desirable match.

Washington escorted Mary and her sister to dances and parties; they also visited the famous "Microcosm, or World in Miniature"—one of the popular "cultural" exhibitions of the time.

But a Captain Morris appeared on the scene—a British officer, very handsome and dashing. Mary seemed to prefer him, although her sister assured George that his own timidity in love was his single



fault. As he grew discouraged, duty called more strongly, and he rode away to the south.

**L**ETTERS came from his friends. They advised him to return to New York at once—to "storm Mary's heart", and not take "No" for an answer. George did go north—but it was too late. The brilliant Captain Morris had taken advantage of his absence. His engagement to beautiful Mary Phillips was announced, and they were married soon after.

It was the end of that romance, but not the end

## Creative Impulse of Clothing Salesman Is Expressed In Hobby of Artistic Rug Making

**D**O YOUR HANDS clamor for something to do? Try hooking rugs!

According to J. P. Scott, who recently completed a rug measuring three feet by eight and a half feet which experts declare is a masterpiece, making these decorative home pieces liberates creative impulses, cures "nerves" and furnishes some real exercise. Scott lives in Los Angeles.

With 18½ pounds of old woolen rags, and at a total cost of \$16, Scott invested 249 hours of leisure time in his rug. Experts value it at a minimum of \$300. Not a bad return, even when looked at in the cold light of hourly wages!

The real wages are the satisfaction of having created something both beautiful and useful, Scott

of love. Women liked George Washington. He was known as the "best horseman of his age, and most graceful rider." His expense books show orders given to "Tailors, Hatters, Jewellers, and Saddlers." He was always dressed in the latest fashion and paid careful attention to his appearance.

He wrote innumerable letters to Sally Fairfax, and treasured those received from her. Possibly he finally forgot Mary Phillips, but he remembered Sally Fairfax all his life.

**M**EN DID NOT always marry their first love—and George Washington, who had several early romances which came to nothing, finally met Martha Dandridge Custis. She was a young widow, pretty, charming—and very much in love with George.

Their wedding was a colorful affair, attended by British officers in bright uniforms, plantation owners of Virginia, and all of Washington's friends.

Martha wore shining white satin, a quilted petticoat, high-heeled shoes with diamond buckles and point-lace ruffles. George appeared in a plain, civilian blue-cloth suit; his hair was powdered in the fashion of the day.

They made a handsome couple. And perhaps it was as well that he had not succeeded in his first romances, for he lived happily with Martha to the end of his days.

says, and the relaxation from workaday pursuits. A clothing salesman for over 33 years, Scott has spent over 82,000 hours on his feet taking care of a huge clientele. He sought some hobby for out-



Novel indeed is the pastime of J. P. Scott, who is shown above pursuing his hobby—the making of hooked rugs.

side interest to relax his mind in his spare time.

**P**EOPLE whose work requires that they must stand a greater part of the day will appreciate Scott's desire to have a hobby where one can sit down and one that keeps the hands busy. He tried several ideas and hit on the hooked rug just recently as the ideal avocation.

The rags from which his rugs are made are all wool and selected as carefully as jewels for color. One requisite is that they must be thoroughly faded. To make sure that there is no more "run" left in certain colors, he boils them first, then hangs them in brilliant sunlight for three weeks.

Satisfied that the colors will not change, he tears them into strips about one-half inch wide, keeping the various shades carefully separated. A design is laid out on a piece of material resembling heavy sacking. Then the hook is pushed through the base material from the top and the strips of cloth fed with the other hand from underneath. That sounds easy—and it is. The opportunity for exercise comes in the tightness with which the hooking is done.

The more firmly the hooks are made the finer the rug and the longer it will endure.

**T**HE SKILL and artistry of the rug comes from the originality of design and the selection of the color scheme. Blending of the vari-colored rags permits delicate shadings almost equal to those secured in an oil painting.

In one floral design on Scott's large rug there are seven distinct color shadings in one flower alone. It took two and a half hours to make this single flower.

Most satisfactory materials are jersey sweaters, bathing suits, ladies' coats, men's woolen bath robes and flannel trousers. Some rug makers prefer to dye their own rags but Scott takes no chances on dyes that might run or fade and sticks to well matured material that has been aged by natural contact with air, sunlight and frequent washings.

Hooking rugs is returning to favor as a creative diversion, a number of teachers being available for instruction. The Goodwill Industries have a special department for old rag connoisseurs and devotees of the hook may be seen there any day as they paw over the piles of washed and sterilized clothes of happier days in search for a particularly elusive shade of blue or gold to add to their current creation at home.