

Riding the Sooner Range

By TED BEAIRD

THAT boy—*how* he has ridden the Range! Maybe I should say *International Ranges*, and how! The more I read his stuff—well, the more I like him! The man in question? This ERNIE PYLE (the columnist plus the girl he often mentions in his daily column, namely, Mrs. Pyle). Indeed, to date I have never had the honor to meet him in person—but maybe some day! Well this chap Ernie should have been a Sooner grad—or at least an “X” of O. U.! In his world-wide column release in the closing hours of November, 1940, just prior to the event of events—when Sir Jack Crane plus the ten or so other Texas Longhorns down Austin way took care of the Kimbrough Aggies from College Station-ville to the tune of 7 to 0, and—while Coach Chief Tom and the Sooner football kids are on their second day out toward Frisco—Ernie, the globe trotter, stated, “Travel, they say, is educational. And so we have found in these last five and a half years of constant wandering.” Yes, liking his stuff—following him line by line over these years in newspapers throughout the states—that started me to thinkin’! So with the full 1940 Thanksgiving evening to spend down here in Ft. Worth, Texas, while awaiting an important conference tomorrow, it’s up to me to beat the deadline and come forth with *Riding the Sooner Range*.

Thinking and musing, if you please, of *what* and *all* Ted Beaird would have missed had he never been accorded the privilege of *Riding the Sooner Range*, and (as “Globe Trotter” Ernie puts it), “Why, if we had just been sitting at a desk through all these years instead of bustling around, I never would have learned that—etc., etc.” So it is with your hired hand—without this wanderin’ around as an O. U. student-kid plus small time O. U. employee since 1916, I never would have learned—First, that in the span of a lifetime an eminent old gentleman of the type of DR. J. W. SCROGGS could have meant so much to one boy as he meant to me—and even though 88 years is more than a span of life, it was hard to pay our last respects on Monday of this week at his passing! Second, that series of days and nights (back in the middle 20’s), plowin’ through Southwestern Oklahoma mud (with the then kid HOMER HECK, ’35), establishing visual education centers in Chickasha, with ELMER FRAKER, ’20ba, ’30ma, TOM T. MONTGOMERY, ’26m.ed; MEL NASH, ’19ba, ’27ma; BRUCE MYERS, ’22ba, ’34 m.ed; and others—on to Lawton and some work with the then superintendent of schools, M. L. COTTON, ’16ba, ’29ms, Larry’s dad—“Pot of Gold” Maurice (Larry) Cotton—you know; Science Teacher—and still is—LILY STAFFORD, ’19ba; DANIEL BECKER, ’22ed, ’35m.ed, principal of high school—and still is—and other near-Fort Sill-ites! Third, to meet and know (back in September, 1916) fine chaps like the Roark boys—RALPH, ’18, ED, ’18, LOUIS, ’12 ba, plus sister RUTH, ’22, and my 1916 house mother—Mother Roark (520 West Eufaula) who, some years later, was the attending nurse when I lost my dad. Fourth, would never have been associated with fine kids who worked for me as students of O. U., now grown-ups out in adult life and at ‘em, like HICKS EPTON, ’32 law, Wewoka; JIM ROBINSON, ’32ba, ’32law, Tahlequah; R. R. MCCORNACK, ’30law, Arkansas City, “the original bluebird philosopher”; “WEE WILLIE” CRAM, ’30ba, from back East—Heavener—now of Des Moines, Iowa, as the polished young counselor-at-law (bet some of that “polish” was acquired in his holiday

trek while making his way to Berlin some years ago with a cargo of sulphur on the old freighter out of Galvez—or possibly Attorney Cram acquired a slight glaze when our car skidded in the Ozark hills of old Mizzou while returning from work at Ohio State University in connection with the International Radio Institute years ago). Other student work hands—now out filling their niche in life? Yes—a number, and thanks to them they have made this *Riding of the Sooner Range* quite, quite pleasant. Some whom we have been privileged to visit with in recent months are—PAUL BROWN, ’27law, Oklahoma City; RALPH KENYON, ’37ba, ’38 law, Oklahoma City; LIEUT. AL FOLLMAR, ’38bus, Pensacola, Florida, was always, as now, a marine at heart—and a good one! GEORGE BROWN, ’29, the big fruit man of Phoenix, Arizona; ISADOR FRANK HAXEL, ’31, the Fort Worth railway postal specialist; CHARLES W. HAXEL, ’28, the Ponca City oil boy; D. EDWARD “BILL” HODGES, ’25ba, ’27law, the corporation lawyer of Bartlesville; WALT EMERY—ineed, professionally, DR. WALTER B. EMERY, ’34law, the teachingest speech professor in the teaching field of speech education, now on the staff of Ohio State University; W. E. “RAGS” RAGSDALE, ’35eng, who radio-ed in from the deserts of New Mexico as an O. U. chap, today the successful business man of St. Louis, Missouri; EARL WARREN, ’36ba, ’38law, Maracaibo, Venezuela, the Spanish speakin’—English-slingin’ steno—and—whata worker he was in my office; BILL BEATTY, ’36bus, Trinidad, B. W. I., another efficient high type male steno who carried a big load as student employee in his day; PAULINE GRAY ROBINSON, ’29ba, Oklahoma City; ARTA MAGNINNIS JAMES, ’32bus, (the mother of Ted, Jr.—and the young mother with the soft Lakeland, Florida drawl); MILDRED “TILLIE THE TOILER” COSTON, ’34bus, now the newest of New Dealers in Washington, D. C.; “PAT” LYON MANNEN, ’34ed, then of Geary, and now, along with husband LYNDEN MANNEN, ’27ba, ’38ma, who hailed from Mountain View, two more of the newest of New Dealers in the Capitol City; FRANCES BROWN, ’34, mother of Linda, wife of the buddy of yours truly in student days, CAPTAIN C. GUY “CGAR” BROWN, ’23ba, doing his year out—on leave from O. U. faculty—in army service at Fort Sill; LELA GIBBINS, ’28, and sis NENA RUTH GIBBINS SMITH, ’36bus, now of Durant, Oklahoma and Houston, Texas, respectively—and whata fine dad and mother they have, now living in Hot Springs, Arkansas—then, (yeah, 15 years ago) in Waurika—and Walt (the dad) gave me a lemon tree he had nursed since “infancy,” and now at 22 years of age (the lemon tree) still under the watchful care of HOWARD JENSEN, ’36, is in the O. U. Greenhouse (or hothouse) producin’ lemons as large as your hat! Others—yes, others, but time plus space will not allow the mention just here!

Fifth, without this gallopin’ over the Range down through the years—well, the pleasant O. U. evening at Barnsdall Park, Los Angeles, just never would have come about—that California evening with HERBERT SMITH, ’32bus, who back in O. U. days was sproutin’ his C. P. A. wings—now in Los Angeles—wings fully developed (and hardened) by making income tax returns! And too, CARL CRAIG, ’30bus, the long, lanky Sooner kid, buddy of Herb Smith, now C. P. A.-ing in Los Angeles. “Radio Mac”—he was known as in those staid days—now

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Los Angeles HAROLD McCOLLUM, '34ba, another Steinie product of the west coast. BRYAN COLE, '34eng, and DORTHA COLE, '33h.ec, W. E. "BABE" SMITH, '20ba, plus dozens and dozens of other Los Angeles Sooners—all at Barnsdall Park that balmy evening—made it something not to be missed!

And sixth, and seventh, etc., etc. (which could be numbered far into the night)—without these years with the privilege of Riding the Sooner Range (and *not* unlike my hero who inspired these mumblings—Ernie Pyle), I could have never had that pleasant Christmas vacation period in Chicago, some years ago, with Sooners, especially HERB SCOTT, '26ba, '26ma, of the O. U. staff—could not have awakened from my deep front seat slumber in the droning Eastern Airline tri-motor over the everglade lands of Florida and awakened to the forced landing at the emergency air port, Orlando (3 a. m. if you please) while enroute to Miami and Coral Gables, Florida, and more Sooners—could not have dashed through the impossible mist and haze out of Terre Haute, Indiana, leaving an assembled group of Sooners there on special mission to grab the American Airliner for a dash back home on an emergency call where many many Sooners of national and international prominence were involved in what they thought was an O. U. crisis—could not have spent those pleasant days at Kent State College, Ohio, with Sooners and more Sooners again on special mission—would not have been privileged to have seen the new old city of New Orleans with some twenty Sooner couples back in a Christmas some years ago—could not have lived in a different (if not more complex) world as we did with those Sooners in Santa Fe, New Mexico, nor could we have stood on the rim of Grand Canyon and grown "poetic" over nature and later enjoyed the mechanical works of Boulder Dam, nor could we have ascended and descended in the galloping Lena car *the great* Pike's Peak on that misty misty day had we not been associated with grads, yes stacks of them, from O. U.—could not have stood in reverence at the Rock of Ages and Carlsbad Caverns without Sooners—could not have appreciated the world's living glaciers in Glacier National Park, and a few hours later to stand in awe in the Redwoods of California, with a marvelous dinner later in 'Frisco China Town—then a swing across the Golden Gate and a long gaze into the Pacific to the west—not without Sooners, sons and daughters of O. U.! Well, in fact, I could not have been accorded the privilege over these years stacked on years of being associated and enjoying the friendship of Sooners throughout the four corners. *And that*, even though it may be limited globe trotting or unlimited globe trotting, has been to Ted Baird the Riding of the Sooner Range.

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School Treasurer

A pioneer Oklahoman and retired bank executive, C. C. Roberts, '01ba, agreed last month to serve as city school treasurer of Oklahoma City. The school board practically "drafted" him for the non-salaried position, feeling that his long experience in general finance, and particularly in the bond business, would be invaluable in the investment of school sinking funds.

Mr. Roberts, now 69 years of age, retired as manager of the bond department of the First National Bank and Trust Company, Oklahoma City, last July after serving the bank and its predecessors in that capacity for twenty-one years.

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Waddy Young, '40, former All-American end on the Sooner football team who played last season on the Brooklyn professional football team, has joined the United States Army Air Corps.

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