

Six Bits a Day: A Hewey Calloway Novel

By Elmer Kelton

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Six Bits a Day: A Hewey Calloway Novel By Elmer Kelton

Hewey Calloway, one of the best-loved cowboys in all of Western fiction, returns in this novel of his younger years as he and his beloved brother Walter leave the family farm in 1889 to find work in the West Texas cow country.
The brothers are polar opposites. Walter pines for a sedate life as a farmer, with wife and children; Hewey is a fiddle-footed cowboy content to work at six bits--75 cents--a day on the Pecos River ranch owned by the penny-pinching C.C. Tarpley. Hewey, who "usually accepted the vagaries of life without getting his underwear in a twist", is fun-loving and whiskey-drinking. He spends every penny he earns and regularly gets into trouble with his boss--and occasionally with the law--often dragging innocent Walter along.
When Walter falls in love with a boarding house girl and begins dreaming of a farmer's life, Hewey jumps at the chance to rescue him from this fate worse than death. He convinces Walter to join him on a mission for Tarpley, driving 600 head of cattle from beyond San Antonio to the Double-C ranch on the Pecos.
The journey is both memorable and dangerous: a murderous outlaw is searching for Hewey; and another ruthless character is determined to sabotage the cattle drive. When the drovers reach the Pecos they find Boss Tarpley in the midst of a vicious range feud with Eli Jessup, a neighboring cowman. Hewey and his brother Walter have to get the herd safely across Jessup's land-but how?
The events of *Six Bits a Day* precede those of Kelton's bestselling *The Good Old Boys* (1978, transformed into the memorable 1995 movie starring Tommy Lee Jones and Sissy Spacek), and *The Smiling Country* (Forge, 1998).

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Hewey Calloway is a fun-loving cowboy who can't shoot straight; his younger brother, Walter, is a serious cowboy who, much to Hewey's horror, wants to marry a pretty girl and become a farmer. Both are looking for a job and a meal in 1889 West Texas. After being mistaken for rustlers and rescued from hanging by a friendly Texas Ranger (a terrific character from another Kelton series), the boys hire on with Mr. C.C. Tarpley's cattle ranch, working for six bits—75 cents—a day. Hewey volunteers them both to drive cattle from San Antonio back to Tarpley's ranch on the Pecos, hoping Walter will forget his fanciful notions. The trip has its share of excitement, but when their Texas Ranger friend asks for help in capturing a hard-boiled case, Hewey gets real nervous. Add some clever cattle stealing back on the Pecos, a range feud between two stubborn cattle barons, rival gangs of cowboys who would rather get drunk together and let their bosses fist-fight, and some of Hewey's pranks, and Kelton, who has more than 40 westerns to his credit, is riding high again. Not much six-gun action, but Hewey's smart mouth more than makes up for the lack of gunsmoke. *(Nov.)*
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From Booklist
In this treat for western fans, Kelton shows us a new side to his popular character Hewey Calloway. It's 1889, and Hewey and his brother, Walter, have left home to find work as cowboys. They hook up with cattleman C. C. Tarpley. Walter, experiencing his first taste of adult life, dreams of settling down and marrying a girl he has just met; Hewey, on the other hand thinks his brother is off his rocker. To rescue Walter from certain doom, Hewey contrives to get the two of them hired on to a cattle drive. Naturally, plenty of danger, excitement, and good-natured fun ensue. Kelton, who seems to have been writing westerns forever, never misses a step in this dusty, noisy, completely absorbing adventure. Larry McMurtry might get lots of publicity and awards for his westerns, but Kelton is just as fine a writer in the genre. *David Pitt*
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Review

"Calloway is one of the most memorable characters in recent western fiction....His heart is as big as the open range."--*Booklist*

"Kelton's latest is a bowl of beans book; it ain't fancy, but it sure is filling and it goes down good."--*Texas Monthly* on *The Smiling Country*

"...Elmer Kelton, a wily old cloudburst, imbues his Westerns with ancient myths and modern motifs that transcend cowboys and cattle trails."--*Dallas Morning News*

"One thing is certain: as long as there are writers as skillful as Elmer Kelton, Western literature will never die."--*True West Magazine*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Deanna Stewart:

Do you among people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this specific aren't like that. This Six Bits a Day: A Hewey Calloway Novel book is readable simply by you who hate those straight word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable reading through experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer associated with Six Bits a Day: A Hewey Calloway Novel content conveys thinking easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking Six Bits a Day: A Hewey Calloway Novel is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

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