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# FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

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FORT WORTH, TEXAS \* \* \* *Where the West Begins* \* \* \* FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1935.

PRICE 3 CENTS

# ROGERS, POST KILLED IN CRASH

# CRACKUP OCCURS IN TAKEOFF FROM RIVER IN ALASKA

## Lindbergh Going After Rogers' Body

NEW YORK, Aug. 16 (AP).—Col. Charles A. Lindbergh and officials of the Pan-American Airways system here have been instructed by Mrs. Will Rogers to fly the body of her husband from Point Barrow, Alaska, to Juneau, it was learned today.

Colonel Lindbergh and the Alaskan service of the Airways company had been in touch with Mrs. Rogers and Mrs. Wiley Post, offering their facilities and aid.

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SEATTLE, Aug. 16.—Will Rogers, cowboy philosopher, actor and air travel enthusiast, and Wiley Post, who circled the earth alone in a plane, were killed Thursday night when their plane crashed 15 miles south of Point Barrow in northernmost Alaska.

The word of their death came Friday to the United States army signal corps headquarters here from their Point Barrow station.

The message said: "The plane crashed 15 miles south of here (Point Barrow) at 5 o'clock last night. Have recovered bodies and placed them in care of Dr. Greist (in charge of a small Point Barrow hospital). Standing by on Anchorage (Alaska) hourly."

The message was signed by Staff Sergeant Morgan, the only army man on duty at the small Point Barrow settlement.

Later, he wirelessly that the plane crashed from only 50 feet in the air after taking off from a small river:

"Native runner reported plane crashed 15 miles south of Barrow.

"Immediately hired fast launch, proceeded to scene, found plane complete wreck, partially submerged two feet water.

"Recovered body of Rogers, then necessary tear plane apart extract body of Post from water.

"Brought bodies to Barrow, turned over to Dr. Greist, also salvaged personal effects which I am holding.

"Advise relatives and instruct this station fully as to procedure.

"Natives camping small river 15 miles south here claim Post and Rogers landed, asked way to Barrow.

"Taking off engine misfired on right bank while only 50 feet over water.

"Plane out of control, crashed, tearing right wing off and toppling over, forced engine back through body of plane.

"Both apparently killed instantly

"Both bodies bruised.

"Post's wrist watch broken stopped 8:18 p. m."

Henry W. Greist operates the Presbyterian Hospital at Point Barrow, which is maintained primarily for the care of Eskimos. He had planned a vacation which Post had planned would take him to Moscow but Rogers had not decided whether he

Post and Rogers were on an aerial (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4).

## WILL ROGERS' LAST MESSAGE TO STAR-TELEGRAM READERS

FAIRBANKS, Alaska, Aug. 15.—*Visited our new emigrants; now this is not the time to discuss whether it will succeed or whether it won't, whether it's a farming country or whether it is not and to enumerate the hundreds of mistakes and confusions and rows and arguments and management in the whole thing at home and here. As I see it, there is not but one problem, now that they are here, and that's to get 'em housed within six or eight weeks. Things have been a terrible mess, they are getting 'em straightened out but even now not fast enough. There is about 7 or 8 hundred of 'em, about 200 went back, also about that many workmen sent from the transient camps down home (not CCC) and just lately they are using about 150 Alaskan workmen paid regular wages, but it's just a few weeks to snow now and they have to be out of the tents, both workmen and settlers. Plenty food and always has been and will be; they can always get that in, but it's houses they need right now and Col. Hunt in charge realizes it. You know, after all, there is a lot of difference in pioneering for gold and pioneering for spinach.*

Editor's Note—This telegram, the last which Will Rogers wrote for Star-Telegram readers, was filed in Alaska late Thursday and was received in Fort Worth shortly before midnight Thursday. The message was typical of the man—seeing good in others, trying to foster a spirit of peace and harmony among his fellow citizens.

# Will Rogers and Wiley Post Killed When Airplane Crashes in Alaska

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

would accompany him further than Nome, where Wiley planned to establish a base for his projected flight across Siberia.

## Mrs. Post Withdrew.

Early plans for the flight included arrangements for Mrs. Post, the flier's wife, to accompany them. At the last moment Mrs. Post withdrew and Post and Rogers flew into the North.

Mrs. Rogers, wife of the humorist-philosopher, and Mrs. Post were notified of the tragedy by Capt. Frank E. Stoner of the signal corps headquarters here.

A coast guard cutter, the Northland, was ordered to turn back to Point Barrow, which it left Thursday, to pick up the bodies and bring them to Seattle.

The pontoon-equipped plane took off from Fairbanks late Thursday, but when Post learned that a dense fog shrouded Point Barrow, he set his ship down on the small stream.

The Department of Commerce at Washington, through Secretary Roper, ordered inspectors to proceed at once to the scene of the wreck.

The inspectors, however, lack jurisdiction to act, as the accident did not occur on a regular airline, and the plane was privately owned.

## Small Settlement.

Rogers had been especially anxious to get to Barrow, the small settlement 11 miles from where Point Barrow juts into the Arctic Ocean, for he wanted to chat with Charles Brower, known throughout Alaska as the "King of the Arctic."

Brower has lived 51 years within the Arctic Circle. He operates a trading post and whaling station at Barrow.

The plane in which the Oklahomans went to their sudden death was a new one, having been constructed at Burbank, Cal., especially for the Alaska-Siberian flight.

It was of a distinctive model, of low wing construction, and resembled the plane used by Col. and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh in their 1931 flight to Japan and their 1933 flights across the North and South Atlantic.

The territory south of Barrow in which the crash occurred is tundra land. It is generally devoid of bodies of water large enough to accommodate the landing of a plane.

Before Morgan's last message was received, Lew Parmenter, an aviation mechanic of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, expressed the opinion that Post must have experienced motor trouble or some other mechanical difficulty while flying through the fog-banked area.

## Bad Weather Flier.

"Post was an excellent bad weather flier," Parmenter said. "That is, bad weather couldn't stop him, and he flew expertly in bad weather as in good. For that reason I think he probably got engine trouble or something, and had to come down to a landing, then found there was no water on which to land."

Mrs. Post, the flier's widow, was told of the accident at Ponca City, Okla., to which city she went a day or two ago to avoid publicity attendant upon her husband's flight. Also at Ponca City is L. E. Gray, Post's brother-in-law, who said he believed motor difficulties caused the accident.

"Wiley never took chances with defective mechanical parts," he said. "His past record and his care in making those stratosphere flights prove that. I feel confident it was motor trouble."

Further details of the accident were being vigorously sought Friday, both by the signal corps headquarters here and by the world of friends both victims had.

The only source of information for many hours was Sergeant Morgan. Morgan, Dr. Griest and an American school teacher are practically the only white people in the lonely Barrow region. The others are Eskimos and Indians.

## Wanted to "Hunt Tigers."

After stops at Point Barrow and Nome, Post intended to continue his flight to Siberia where he said he was going to "hunt tigers."

It was generally understood that

Rogers planned to go along, but before they left Fairbanks Thursday the humorist said he had not definitely decided. Two days ago in Anchorage he remarked that he might spend the Winter in Alaska with "sourdoughs dunned up in their cabins" along the Yukon and Mackenzie Rivers.

Once before Wiley Post "cracked up" in Alaska. That was when his red monoplane, the Winnie Mae, was damaged in a forced landing near Flat, in Central Alaska, on the round-the-world flight which set the record—a record still unbeaten.

Post was unhurt then, repaired his plane and resumed his flight with a loss of less than a day's time.

The famous "Winnie Mae" in which Post then made his famous flight and which, a few months ago was about through as a vehicle for further air adventures, survives her master. She rests now in a Los Angeles hangar.

Grief that came to the entire world when news of the tragedy spread was reflected in comment from all ranks of life, from members of the Congress that Rogers so drolly and good-naturedly lampooned to the home folks of Claremore, Okla., and Rogers, Ark., where the humorist was married 27 years ago.

## "Lost Two Friends."

"I lost two of the best friends I ever had, in that plane crash," said M. R. Harrison, who manages the Will Rogers Hotel at Claremore.

Darryl F. Zanuck, Hollywood film magnate in charge of many of Rogers' successful movies, was so choked with emotion to make an immediate statement. All Hollywood was stunned and grief-stricken. Rogers was one of the biggest "box office" actors in pictures.

Secretary of Commerce Roper said at Washington:

"Words can not express my sorrow at the loss of these two splendid developers of aviation."

The Commerce Secretary voiced the grief of aviation enthusiasts generally, for it would have been hard to find two men who have done more for aviation than Post and Rogers—Post as a pioneer pilot and daring air adventurer, Rogers as the best known "air commuter." There was hardly a person in America who, as a private citizen, has done more to create public confidence in flying than Rogers.

The Royal Aero Club of London, through its secretary, referred Friday to Wiley Post as "a marvelous flier and a magnificent fellow" whose achievements "have drawn our deepest admiration."

"The Royal Aero Club is deeply grieved to learn of the death of this marvelous pilot," the secretary said. London papers displayed the story over all others.

## "Worst Since Rockne Crash."

Clyde Pangborn, himself a round-the-world flier who even now is planning a flight to beat the Post record, said the tragedy in Alaska was "the worst since the Knute Rockne crash, from a public viewpoint." Pangborn is in New Jersey testing his new plane.

Vice President Garner, a pal and crony of Will Rogers, said: "That's awful bad," when told of the death of his friend.

Former President Hoover, in Chicago, said news of the deaths was "a terrible shock to me."

"I have long known these two fine Americans and have long been appreciative of their accomplishments. In origin and accomplishment they were typically American. They were great souls and I feel a sense of deep personal loss in their passing."

Post's home town of Maysville, Okla., was incoherent with grief. There is no telephone at the little farm home of Post's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Post, and a messenger was sent there to break the news to them of their son's death.

Speaker Byrns of the House of Representatives said at Washington:

## "Had Ear of Public."

"Will Rogers had the ear of the public as few in this country did. His death is a real loss—and Post's is, too."

Point Barrow, northernmost white settlement in America, has a popula-

tion of several hundred natives and about a dozen whites, including the Signal Corps operator, his wife and child; Dr. Greist, his family, and the nurses in the Presbyterian Hospital.

The accident occurred at the height of the brief Arctic Summer when it is daylight almost around the clock.

Post and Rogers had been entertained in Fairbanks for several days while their plane was being serviced. They flew in a regular transport plane to Anchorage Wednesday and visited the Matanuska colony near there.

The pair left Fairbanks Thursday night but set their plane down on Harding Lake, 50 miles away, to await lifting of dense fog in the Point Barrow region.

Post arrived here from the south Aug. 1, accompanied by Mrs. Post, who had planned to make the Siberian trip with her husband. At San Francisco, he had been delayed several days obtaining passport permission to enter Russia.

## Freed From Movie Work.

Rogers, freed from his moving picture work for a time, then flew north and joined them here on Aug. 5. He left Los Angeles under an "assumed name" but his identity was soon discovered and he was welcomed here.

On the next day, the two took test flights in Post's plane, which had by then been equipped with pontoons, and Rogers also found time for a polo workout with polo players here. He was their guest that evening and told them, among other things, that he was going to "get a polo team going on the Matanuska project," as that was about the "only thing" the Democrats haven't done for the colony.

That evening, friends disclosed later, Rogers "kidded" Mrs. Post about the hunting and fishing they planned on isolated Alaskan lakes, saying it was "no place for a lady." The "kidding," in which Post joined, finally convinced Mrs. Post not to make the trip.

Consequently, the next morning, Aug. 7, when the two hopped from the Renton Airport on Lake Washington, south of here, Mrs. Post was left behind. She said the trip might be "too strenuous."

She remained here only a few days, and then flew south in a private plane to San Francisco.

Post and Rogers made a leisurely flight of eight hours, 15 minutes, that day to Juneau, not stopping at Ketchikan, although before leaving here Rogers had said he might have to "get a fish dinner at Ketchikan." Rain and low-lying clouds lay along the route they traversed, but they arrived safely at the territory's capital.

## Guests of Governor.

Governor John W. Troy of Alaska and Joe Crosson, a hunting companion last year of Post, welcomed the two on their arrival at Juneau.

They were the Governor's guests that night at the territorial mansion. The next day it still was raining and their flight, which by now had become a "vacation trip," they said, was delayed. Rogers bought rubbers, two raincoats and other equipment, saying humorously, "with this weather, I'll need lots of them."

Within a few days they hopped again over into the historic Klondike gold territory, at Dawson, Y. T., and even there found themselves the objects of much attention. Miners and prospectors came miles to see them.

Within two days they took off again, their destination unannounced as usual, and they turned up at Aklavik, N. W. T., at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, on the Arctic.

Rogers commented in one of his pert dispatches that the Eskimos there were "thicker than rich men at a save-the-Constitution convention." He also found it cold. It was 40 above zero. Their stay there was short.

A flight back to interior Alaska, to Fairbanks, followed, and then in a commercial plane they flew south to Anchorage and over to the Matanuska project.

"Pioneering for spinach is different than pioneering for gold," said

# POST'S CAREER WAS BEGUN AS BARNSTORMER

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

flown around the earth and landed again at New York.

Post was born at Grand Saline, Texas. The aviation "bug" first bit him in 1919 while he was a rigger's helper in the Oklahoma oil fields.

His original investment in aviation was \$25, which he took from the lean purse of a barnstorming pilot to give him "the works" of an ancient "Texaco."

## Became Parachute Jumper.

It was five years later before Post flew again, but the virus of the flying "bug" had taken effect. This time he went out as a parachute jumper at \$25 a leap.

He saved enough to learn flying, but in 1926 he tired of flying borrowed machines and went back to the oil fields to get together a stake of his own. He lost his left eye when struck by a steel splinter chipped off a link pin.

Post's flying first attracted national attention in August, 1930, when he won the nonstop air derby from Los Angeles to Chicago. From that time on he was almost constantly in the limelight of aviation, following soon with the round-the-world flight with Gatty, then his solo record-breaker and recently his attempts to reach superspeed in the stratosphere.

Post used his faithful Winnie Mae, the ship that carried him to the heights, in his four unsuccessful attempts to span the continent in the stratosphere.

## "Pure Sentiment."

His reason for this, he said, was "pure sentiment," and it was with reluctance that he saw her head for retirement recently after the last attempt.

The ship, a high-wing monoplane, was named for Winnie Mae Fain, the daughter of Hall, Post's early financial backer.

On these high altitude flights he used a landing gear fastened in such a manner that it could be detached upon taking off, to reduce the wind resistance. The plane was landed on its "belly," on a small wooden skid.

His primary purpose, Post said, was not to break the existing speed record, but to "prove my theories as to the possibilities of stratosphere flying."

"The Winnie Mae is not a racing plane," he said. "The only special equipment on it is the supercharger and radio. Its normal cruising speed at ordinary altitudes, with landing gear, is 150 miles an hour."

# Rogers Picture to Be Shown Aug. 24

"Will Rogers' latest released film, "Doubting Thomas," is scheduled to be shown at the Tivoli Theater beginning Aug. 24. It was presented earlier this week at the New Liberty. This is the film in which Billie Burke appears as Rogers' wife. She was stagestruck and took part in an amateur play.

Rogers' latest unreleased picture is one in which he and Irvin S. Cobb appear as rival steamboat captains. Rogers, on his last visit in Fort Worth, said this was one of the best films he ever had made.

"Life Begins at 40" and "The County Chairman" are other Rogers films which have given pleasure to Fort Worth admirers of the cowboy comedian in recent months.

Rogers, but his other comment was favorable. "I didn't see any mosquitoes there," he said.

They returned to Fairbanks, and then followed their tragic flight north to Point Barrow, ending in disaster near their destination.



Will Rogers (left), and Wiley Post, as they laughed and joked before their takeoff for an Alaskan flight which ended Thurs-

day in tragedy when their plane crashed to earth near Point Barrow, killing both the famous humorist and the noted globe-gird-

ling aviator. This picture, among the last ever taken of the two together, was snapped at Seattle.

## PLAN APPROVED BY METHODISTS

CHICAGO, Aug. 16 (AP).—Representatives of the three leading branches of Wesleyanism Friday voted approval of a plan to merge the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Protestant Church into one body.

To be effective, the plan must next be ratified by the general conferences of the three churches. It will be presented to the Northern and Southern units of the Methodist Episcopal Church next May and to the Methodist Protestant Church conference in 1938.

The approved plan involved ap-

## Rogers Was 'Adopted' Citizen of Ft. Worth

BY BESS STEPHENSON.

No other city in the world except the movie colony and Claremore will miss the slow, mischievous grin of Will Rogers as much as Fort Worth.

No other State except Oklahoma,

More about Will Rogers and Wiley Post on Pages 4, 5 and 10

his birthplace, has known him more intimately than Texas.

He never lived here, but the bobbing forelock and slow grin which marked the humorist were as well known to Fort Worth as to Claremore itself.

He came here so often, made so

many public appearances (most of them extemporaneous) that he came to be an adopted citizen. Once he actually stopped off without being interviewed. That was a phenomenon.

"I'm just homefolks here now," he said to airport officials, "just a plain, everyday guy to you all. That's fine." Will Rogers was a cowboy, humorist, writer, lecturer, philosopher, polo player, world traveler, movie actor and flier. Fort Worth has seen him at all his tricks except polo.

It has seen him in other roles, too, the serious, grammatical role, as he talked with Amon G. Carter and other close friends at the Fort Worth

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# TESTIMONY OF WEAVER IS ATTACKED

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described by Weaver as neither novel nor unreasonable.

Similar requirements, he said, are made by utility regulatory commissions in many States, and are recommended by the Bureau of Standards.

He said he could see no reason for installing a pressure gauge on each meter to meet the above requirements. The gas company had claimed it would be put to expense of more than \$100 to comply with the ordinance in that respect.

Dilution of West Texas gas widens the difference between it and the Shamrock gas in regard to the properties which make the two fuels interchangeable in a burner, Weaver testified Thursday afternoon. The gas company contends that dilution was undertaken so that the two gases can be used in the same burner without readjustment.

What the gas company failed to consider, according to Weaver's testimony, was that dilution increases the specific gravity of the West Texas gas, widening the difference between it and Shamrock gas in that respect. He said specific gravity is an important factor in the interchangeability of gases.

His tests here showed, Weaver said, that West Texas gas is more nearly interchangeable with Shamrock gas before dilution than after.

He explained that the importance of the interchangeability of gases for Fort Worth consumers is that burners here receive gas sometimes from West Texas and at other times from the Shamrock field.

## BUILDING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the equalization board expects to give the traction company. The board has not completed its figures.

The 100 per cent value of the Texas Electric Service Company has been increased \$32,446 by the city assessors to a total of \$10,585,709; the Lone Star Gas Company \$34,401 to a total of \$5,395,560 and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company \$16,251 to a total of \$8,405,041.

Property valued at \$308,055,000 is listed on the 1934 rolls and is assessed for tax purposes at \$169,261,424, but Macy estimates that the assessed value of property on the new rolls will be reduced because depreciation on existing property is still running ahead of new construction.

The anticipated decrease in the assessed value of property on the 1935 rolls will not be sufficient to carry the total below the \$164,954,585 valuation for 1927.

Between 1927 and 1931 the assessed value of taxable property jumped to \$188,308,602. The national construction slump did not hit Fort Worth until 1932 when the total of the assessed value dropped to \$184,378,622. It declined to \$172,633,729 in 1933.

## RELATIVES OF ROGERS ARE STUNNED BY NEWS

MUSKOGEE, Okla., Aug. 16 (AP).—Cousins of Will Rogers here and in Tahlequah were stunned Friday by word of the death of the famed humorist.

Morris McSpadden of Roff and Herbert McSpadden of Oologah, nephews of Rogers who now operate a ranch owned by the comedian, were shocked by the news.

The cousins are W. M. and John D. Gulager of Muskogee and H. G. Gulager, John M. Adair and Mrs. Ed Hicks, all of Tahlequah.

# Rogers Was 'Adopted' Citizen of Ft. Worth

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Club, and the role of a father, asking about his kid's first job. Will Rogers Jr. worked here one Summer.

Through all his visits here, the affection Fort Worth held for Will Rogers deepened. Hamburger stands on the road leading from the airport came to be named for him, and he said: "I used to envy General Grant and Jesse James because they had cigars named for them."

Texas claimed Will Rogers for a special idol after his triumphant tour for drouth relief in 1931.

### Showed His Great Heart.

He showed the great heart that lay behind his frequently barbed witticisms by volunteering to stage a series of benefits through the Southwest to aid the victims of severe drouth in the Fall of 1930.

His benefit performance before enormous crowds in 11 Texas cities drew \$73,924 for drouth relief. The humorist's warm feeling for Fort Worth developed out of that tour. He liked this city because \$18,350 was raised here for drouth relief. It was more than twice that raised in any other Texas city.

Long before talking pictures gave Will Rogers the perfect medium of expression for his slow drawl and homely philosophy, he was known to newspaper readers all over the country for his "Worst Story I Heard Today."

A more limited audience knew him as the cowboy humorist in Zach Mulhall's Wild West Show and for six years he spent as star of Ziegfeld's Follies.

He spoke here first in 1925, twirling the lassoes and firing a volley of wisecracks to a large audience at First Baptist Church. He dropped in on the Elks Club Minstrel in 1931, was introduced as "a real Democrat" and spoke this prophecy about the approaching presidential election:

"Democrats are drifting back from the Hoover wagon."

He had kidded the Texas Legislature at Austin, visited the Cowboy Reunion at Stamford, the race meet at Arlington Downs and many other events of importance in Texas.

Rogers was a staunch friend of the late W. T. Waggoner and his supporter all during the fight to have racing legalized in Texas. He was on hand for the first racing meet after parimutuel betting was legalized.

It was rumored at one time that the cowboy humorist would buy the 200,000-acre JA Ranch, southwest of Claremore. The comedian did inspect the property, but denied that he intended buying it.

### Problem to Reporters.

Will Rogers was the great problem of the newspaper reporter. Always good natured about interviews, he, nevertheless, refused to be anything but serious in his answers to questions.

"I get paid for being funny," he grinned. "I can't waste my talents."

He didn't waste them, but gave them away lavishly for worthy causes. Only this year he flew from Cincinnati to Austin to speak in the interest of crippled children of Texas at a benefit at the University of Texas.

Texans were among the first to suggest Will Rogers for President in 1931. He stopped the talk and referred to the matter here a few weeks later as "a deplorable sign" that people might begin to take him seriously.

"No humorist wants to be taken seriously until after he's dead and, maybe not, then," he said.

### Ocean Far From Home.

Will Rogers turned the spotlight of his shrewd but homely humor on every movement and event of world importance. He found time, too, to talk about Texas and the projects dear to the hearts of his friends in Texas.

Quotable comments from his talks in Texas include the hilarious description of the Trinity River with which he regaled the drouth benefit audience in 1931 when canalization talk was just beginning.

"They told me when I was here

to start my tour," he said, "that they were going to bring the ocean right up to Fort Worth, seriously, no foolin'." The ocean right up to Fort Worth? I asked. Well, that is serious. I don't suppose it's ever been that far away from home before."

"So when I got in my plane and started for Austin," he went on, "I asked the pilot to show me the Trinity River. After he'd pointed and pointed and I still couldn't see anything, he got way down near the ground and said 'There!' Well, the river wasn't flowing, it was oozing. I'm afraid when you get your ocean up here, somebody's going to drive a herd of cattle across it and drink it up."

### Garner "Living It Down."

Other samples of Rogers' humor heard in Fort Worth:

"Me and the President of Nicaragua get along great. We both speak broken English."

"Say, where would you get a more liberal party than the Democrats? Ain't they givin' away five billion dollars?"

"What's the objection to a little horse racin' and gamblin'? Take Mr. Sterling here (then Governor of Texas), he's got lots of money. He picks up the telephone, calls his broker and lays a bet on some stock or other. And the thing about betting on stocks—something you buy from somebody who never owned 'em or saw 'em—is that they drop in the night. You don't even get to see 'em run."

"Jack Garner has about lived down being Vice President."

### When Democrats Are Fed.

"I didn't want to thank you for that cup you give me (Fort Worth gave him a silver cup after his drouth relief program here) until I got it off and found out whether it would tarnish."

"I may not like some things Europe is up to, but I ain't a-sayin'. It's their country. Let 'em run it."

"Our great-grandchildren will be appointing commissions to find out about drinking."

"The people should support the Government, not the Government the people."

"We feed the poor on Christmas Day and the Democrats on Jackson Day."

## CLAREMORE SUSPENDS BUSINESS, MOURNS 'BILL'

CLAREMORE, Okla., Aug. 16 (AP). This Oklahoma resort town, made famous by its first citizen, Will Rogers, suspended business Friday when word of the death of the humorist was received.

Knots of people collected on streets, talking about nothing but the death of their beloved "Bill."

"It is the biggest loss this country could have had," said A. B. Robinson, for 30 years a close friend of Rogers and whose wife was Rogers' cousin. "Everyone in Claremore feels like he had lost his best friend."

## MRS. ROGERS AND DAUGHTER ARE STANDING SHOCK BRAVELY

By International News Service.

SKOWHEGAN, Maine, Aug. 16.—Mrs. Betty Blake Rogers and her actress daughter, Mary, were "very brave" Friday when news of the plane crash death of Will Rogers reached them here.

Mrs. Rogers, here with her daughter who is the lead in an airplane play, "Ceiling Zero," and Mary retired to their cottage immediately after hearing of the death.

Ironically an airplane crash figures prominently in the plot of the play now in rehearsal at the Summer theater here.

No plans have been formed by the pair.

News of the tragic death of Rog-

## FEDERAL PROBE IN EXTORTION CASE BEGUN

DALLAS, Aug. 16 (AP).—Frank J. Blake, head of the Dallas office of the federal division of investigation, Friday took charge of an investigation of the alleged extortion letter-writing activities of Allen Gentry, 14, Forest Avenue High School student. A man was held also in the case.

The boy, trapped on the Lake June road Thursday night by deputy sheriffs as he picked up a dummy package, made two written statements

to Sheriff E. S. Smith in the presence of a newspaper man admitting he wrote two extortion letters to men living in his neighborhood in the Elam community. He said he wrote them "just because I needed some money," and insisted no one else was implicated.

A letter demanded \$300 of W. F. Pearson, shop superintendent of the Dallas Gas Company, and directed that he leave the money in a package on the Lake June road in front of the old Baptist church. It was here that Gentry was arrested.

The letter said Pearson's home and family would be blown up if he disregarded instructions.

The other letter, which Gentry admitted writing, demanded \$150 from L. R. Payne. Payne dropped a note asking that a definite date be set, and dropped it in the designated place, and heard nothing more about it. Gentry said he was mixed on his dates, and figured Payne did not get the letter in time.

## Another Utility Bill Effort Is Fruitless

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 (AP).—Compromise offers submitted by House and Senate conferees on the public utility bill failed Friday in another vain effort to get together on the provision for compulsory abolition of "unnecessary" holding companies.

Senator Wheeler of Montana, insisting upon some form of dissolution of surplus holding companies, asserted, however, that prospects for agreement were "a little brighter."

The conferees spent two hours in debate over compromise proposals and broke up subject to a call for a meeting Monday.

## E. J. DUNHAM, RELIEF CLIENT, HUNTING JOB

E. J. Dunham, charged with aggravated assault in connection with the hair-pulling of Mrs. Kathryn Henry, relief case worker, went job hunting Friday.

At noon he reported no results from his quest for work.

ers and Wiley Post in Alaska did not reach Skowhegan until noon.

Noticeably affected, Mrs. Rogers and her daughter stood up bravely under the shock, but declined to comment on the tragedy.

The daughter of Rogers and her mother came here at the start of the Summer season with the Lake-wood Players. A group of prominent actors and actresses as well as the sons and daughters of prominent stage stars had appeared here.

Mary, following in her father's footsteps, has established herself as one of the leading young stage actresses during her brief career.

It is believed Mrs. Rogers and her daughter will leave for the West immediately to arrange funeral services.

# ROGERS LOVED BY AMERICA'S MILLIONS

Will Rogers was beloved by America's millions as perhaps no other single person was loved.

His ready wit, his "homespun" acting, both in the old-time Ziegfeld Follies and later in the movies, and his daily newspaper comment, with its witty and, oftentimes, barbed "wisecracks" about current events, made him one of the most popular public figures in the country.

Ironically, his death in a plane crash climaxed a long campaign waged by him through his newspaper comments to popularize flying and to impress the safety of aviation upon the public mind.

Rogers was born Nov. 4, 1879, at Oologah, Okla., then the Indian Territory.

## Married in 1908.

From a poor family, the comedian was practically self-educated at the Willis Hassell School at Neosho, Mo., and at the Kemper Military Academy at Booneville.

On Nov. 25, 1908, he married Betty Blake at Rogers, Ark.

From this union were born three children, Will Jr., Mary and Jim.

The man who was destined to become the world's most brilliant wit learned to rope and ride while he was a ranch hand in Oklahoma.

He was 26 years old when he made his first stage appearance—in a vaudeville skit at the old Hammerstein's Roof Garden in New York. His success was instantaneous and from 1914 to 1926, except for three years in the cinema, he was starred with Ziegfeld Follies and the Night Frolics.

Rogers was an intimate friend alike of Presidents and men-in-the-street. He was a frequent White House visitor, but that never prevented him from taking witty potshots at the powers that be.

Former Vice President Charles Gates Dawes of Evanston, Ill., and Rogers were close friends and Dawes was the recipient of many Rogerisms while the Evanstonian ruled over the Senate in the "Hell 'n Maria" days during the last Calvin Coolidge Administration.

## One of Highest Paid Stars.

In recent years, Rogers devoted most of his time to motion pictures and became one of the highest-paid stars in Hollywood. He appeared in more than a score of pictures, the latest of which were "Life Begins at 40" and "Doubting Thomas."

A great wad of gum and a droll Oklahoma drawl were Rogers' chief stage and cinema "props," other than his wit.

Although "Who's Who in California" lists Rogers' first vaudeville appearance as occurring in 1905 at the Hammerstein's roof garden, Rogers himself in 1934 gave a party in Hollywood for George Wirth, circus owner, and announced that it was Wirth who gave him his first job before the public. That, he said, was in 1903 and he wore a black and red velvet costume.

Will Rogers made his first appearance on the legitimate stage in Chicago—at \$75 a week.

It was early in 1900. Prior to that time Rogers had been performing his now-famous Texas pony and lariat act exclusively on vaudeville circuits.

George W. Lederer, pioneer Chicago producer, was one of the first to recognize Rogers' inherent sense of humor. Lederer engaged the comedian to appear in "The Girl Rangers" at the Auditorium Theater in Chicago.

## Among First Air Passengers.

The producer's former wife, Rene Davies, sister of Marion Davies, was in the leading role of "The Girl Rangers." Rogers' "bit" fit in perfectly and he scored an individual success. Critics predicted a brilliant future for him.

His pioneering in aviation was recalled Friday by Harold Crary, vice president of the United Air Lines in charge of traffic, on the occasion of the humorist's tragic death.

He said:

"Will Rogers has flown tens of thousands of miles.

"As a matter of fact, Rogers was one of the first people we ever carried when we started our trans-continental route in the days when we operated single engined planes.

"When we inaugurated our coast-to-coast service Rogers was one of the first to try out the new service."

# GOOD DEEDS OF WILL ROGERS COMPILED

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 (AP).—The National Red Cross Friday was compiling a remarkable honor roll—the good deeds of Will Rogers.

It ran like this:

September, 1926 — Worked with Charles Evans Hughes, now chief

## PAYNE'S DEEP REGARD FOR ROGERS REVEALED.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 (AP).

The deep regard of the Red Cross for Will Rogers was attested in a 1933 telegram to him, made public today.

It read:

"When I pass from the Red Cross and knock at St. Peter's gate, he will ask, 'Who comes here?'"

"I will answer, 'John Barton Payne, chairman of the American Red Cross.'"

"He will ask, 'By what right do you expect to enter?'"

"I will answer, 'I knew Will Rogers.'"

"He will say, 'That is sufficient. Come right in.'"

Mr. Payne died last January.

justice, in a Florida hurricane benefit aboard the Leviathan, raising \$40,000 in a single performance.

Mississippi flood, 1927—By benefit personal appearances, raised more than \$100,000 for flood sufferers.

McAlester, Okla., mine explosion, 1919, 61 men killed—Made large personal donation and raised generous fund for families of victims.

January, 1931—Helped Red Cross organize nationwide drouth relief broadcast including President Hoover, former President Coolidge and Al Smith.

Drouth relief campaign of 1930-31—In airplane with Frank Hawks, speed flier, toured Midwest and Far West making several cities daily, with speeches which greatly accelerated chapter giving.

Nicaraguan earthquake, 1931—Flew to Nicaragua, gave \$5,000 and cheer there, came back and raised a large Nicaraguan fund.

1933-34—Donated \$20,000 for continuing Red Cross public health nursing in places where it was to be cut off due to depression. Only two months ago the Red Cross sent Rogers a pictorial report of the good done with this money.

May, 1933—Rogers wired the Red Cross his intention of "litterin' up the mike with a little Oklahoma grammar" to "make contribution to a couple of good causes," unemployment relief work of the Red Cross and Salvation Army.

Friday James L. Fieser, speaking for Admiral Cary T. Grayson, vacationing in Maine, and the entire Red Cross organization, said: "Literally thousands of Red Cross chapter people will personally miss Will Rogers, not alone for his numerous financial gifts in the furtherance of better health and happier living, and in disaster relief. He often unexpectedly arrived at the point where the need was greatest."

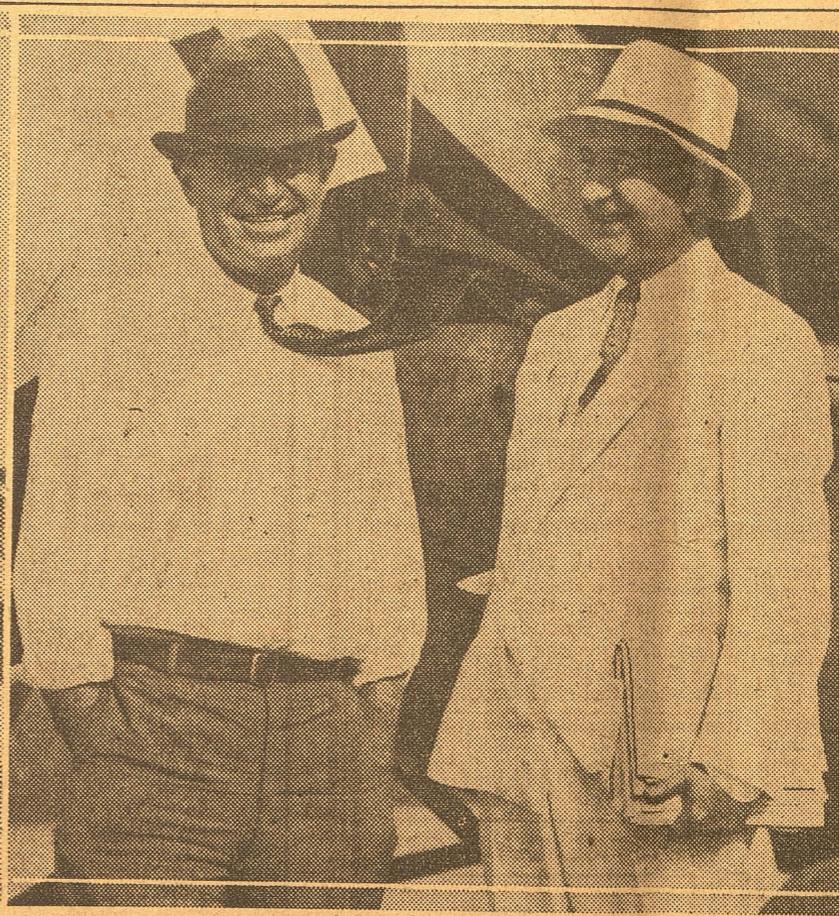
# As Will Rogers Was Seen on Some of His Many Visits to Texas and With Closest Friends



WILL ROGERS (LEFT) IS SHOWN WITH FRANK Hawks, noted pilot during their Red Cross drouth relief tour in 1931. The comedian, who was killed Thursday in Alaska, played before one of the largest audiences in Fort Worth's history in a benefit performance.



THE FAMOUS OKLAHOMA COMEDIAN SHOWED SPECTATORS AT THE Texas cowboy reunion in Stamford in July this year that he had forgotten none of his tricks of twirling a lariat. The cowboy film comedian started his circus and vaudeville career as a rope twirler, and although he later became famous for his quick wit and "horse sense" philosophy, he still practiced with his lariat, sometimes to Mrs. Rogers' regret.



THIS PICTURE OF WILL ROGERS (LEFT) AND AMON G. CARTER was made in Fort Worth in July, 1932. The comedian visited Fort Worth many times during his career, and seldom failed to call up friends between stops of planes on his many trips between Hollywood and the East. He also loved stopping in Fort Worth for a bowl of chili, his favorite food, and corn bread and onions.



THE SCREEN, RADIO AND WRITING STAR IS shown (right) with Fred Stone, his longtime friend of vaudeville days, on Rogers' ranch in California. During Rogers' vaudeville days in New York, the Rogers family and Stone family were next door neighbors in a small town on Long Island.