

Will Has Kind Words for Rex Beach and W.C. Fields and Other Friends

BY WILL ROGERS

WELL, all I know is just what I hear when I talk to somebody, and as I generally do all the talking, why I don't hear much, but I started out on this trip with the idea that I was going to do some listening.

As I told you in a daily dispatch awhile back, Rex Beach hit Juneau just before we took off. Rex seemed to know everybody there, and all over Alaska. That "Spoilers" I expect is one of the finest novels ever written about this or any country.

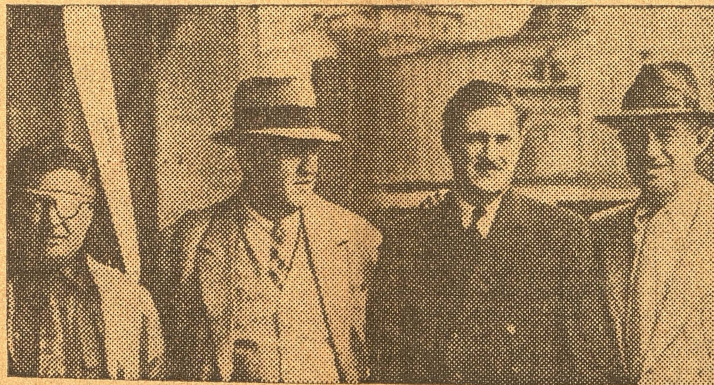
He hasn't been up here in years. He has always maintained some mining claims up around Nome, but it's fishing and hunting where his heart lies. He

had no more than hit Juneau there a few weeks ago when the very next day he was out in what they call "Strip" fishing for what I think they call "Jack Salmon. Then a little later he will start bear hunting, and he sure knows this country.

He came to Nome in about 1901, that was when she was really "Hot." You see the '98'ers were for Dawson and the Klondike District, a thousand and more miles from Nome. Then the Nome strike took it away from the old Klondike District.

Rex and his wife Greta, (that's Mrs. Fred Stone's sister) they were responsible for me in the movies. They were making a great Alaskan picture, and the character was "Laughing Bill Hyde." It was one of his famous short stories, by that same name.

THE last photo made of the famous fliers before they took off on their fatal flight from Point Barrow. It was made at Juneau, Alaska. They are (left to right), Wiley Post, Rex Beach, Joe Crosson and Will Rogers. It was Crosson who flew the bodies of Post and Rogers back to Seattle.



I was playing that Summer in the Follies, and they got the "Nut" idea that I could play the part. We made it while I was working in the show. It was made at the old Ft. Lee Studios, in New Jersey just across the river from New York City. They used to make an awful lot of pictures there. It was made for Mr. Sam Goldwyn, who has all these years remained the famous producer. With producers coming and going, and changing, he has held his own right at the top. He was my first picture boss, and we have remained friends all these years, a rare combination.

ENJOYED ALASKA VISIT

I LEARNED what little I know about mining, which is practically nothing, from that picture we made. Rex supervised the picture, and he made me make all the details as to the actual mining scenes, exactly correct, "Sluice Boxes" and "Panning" the gold. Then Rex wrote all the tub-titles, and they were "Wows." I went to the barber and got a hair cut right in the middle of the picture and like to spoiled it, I didn't know what I was doing, (and here I was going in one door with long hair, and coming out with a hair cut). They all like to had a fit. I think yet it was the best picture I ever made, for I hadn't learned to try to act. There ain't nothing worse than an actor

when we act. I have always had a great respect and friendship for Rex and Mrs. Beach. Rex is an unusual man, outside all this writing. He is an authority on a lot of things. He has a lovely home near Sebring, Florida, and went to work and cleared a lot of swamp lake land and started raising celery on a real scientific principle. He ships it to New York and it's a real boni fide going concern.

Now he has got some Florida dirt, or something that is the very mineral that every person, or plant needs to make it grow. Who ever heard of feeding people "Fertilizer," but that's what it is. It makes grass grow, people grow, chickens lay, cows give milk. It's all developed under (Continued on Page 4.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article, sent by air mail from Juneau, Alaska, on Aug. 10, was received after his fatal crash. Three more, mailed from Juneau the day before the fall, remain to be released. They were prepared in anticipation of a flight to Siberia.

OUR WILL: The life story of Will Rogers starts today on Page 4. It is written by Scott Cunningham, who collected his material by personal contact with the man, and by interviews with Rogers' friends. The writer devoted two years to the task.

Stone Declines to Write for Rogers

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 24 (AP).—An offer that he write a daily opinion, to take the place of the daily offering of the late Will Rogers, was made today to and declined by Fred Stone, noted actor and close friend of the actor-philosopher. The offer was made by Charles Driscoll, representing the syndicate which formerly handled Rogers' writings.

"Will could go on for anybody, take anybody's place and make the show better," said Stone, "but no one in the world could go on for Will Rogers or even attempt to take his place. I would not even think of trying to write for Will Rogers."

OUR WILL:

The Life Story
Of Will Rogers

BY SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

FIRST INSTALLMENT.

WILL ROGERS was born Tuesday night, Nov. 4, 1879, in a valley four miles east of Oologah, Indian Territory. He was nine thirty-seconds (or a little more than one-fourth) Cherokee Indian, and Irish and Welsh.

The Rogers surname is of Norman-French derivation. Sometime between 1642 and 1646 members of this family moved from England to Ireland. Will Rogers' great-great-grandfather, Robert Rogers, was born in Ireland, came to western Virginia about 1800 to trade with the Indians, and married the daughter of another Irish adventurer, Thomas Cordery, whose wife was a full-blood Cherokee. Their fourth child, Robert Jr., married a one-eighth Cherokee, and had moved to the Indian Territory in 1839 when the future father of Will Rogers was born, according to Emmet Starr, author of the History of the Cherokee Indians, published by the Warden Company of Oklahoma City in 1921.

Will Rogers' first and biggest hero was his father. "Clem" Rogers had a hard youth, in the rough country of the Cherokee nation, and was "on his own," running a creek-side trading post, at 17. He had only two negro slaves to help him handle his Osage customers when they grew obstreperous. At 20 he married Mary Schrimsher, the future mother of Will Rogers, a quarter Cherokee herself, and took her back to his lonely post.

Then suddenly he was caught up in the Civil War. As a captain in the Confederate army, he led a charge, on foot, in the battle of Cabin Creek, Indian Territory. He had to start from scratch after the South's surrender, and hauled wagon-freight for five years to make the money with which to start as a rancher.

Tough times make tough men. Clem Rogers was serious, and sometimes crabby. He was mighty plain-spoken, too, but he was never regarded as a "bad man," never wore a gun. He was generous, and if a poor family got a present of a hog, or some flour, it probably came from him.

In 1870 Clem Rogers moved to the spot in the Verdigris Valley where Will was later to be born. After two years a two-story log house was erected. Clem was a man of relative wealth and a power in Cherokee politics in 1879, when his wife told him their sixth child was on the way.

Born In Log House On Verdigris River

A. J. Lane, country doctor, brought Will Rogers into the world in that log house on the Verdigris River bank. After Will was born, he had to be fed on a bottle. He was named William Penn Adair Rogers, after a Cherokee leader. His mother wanted him to be a Methodist preacher.

Willie, as the youngster was called, had three sisters and a brother when he was born, but his 15-year-old brother died of typhoid when Willie was still on his bottle. That left him the only boy in a family of girls, a fact that was to have bearing in the shaping of his sensitive but assertive character. The girl's names were Sallie, Maude and May.

To outrage his wife and daugh-

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The material for Scott Cunningham's "OUR WILL" was collected from personal contact with the man, from interviews with his relatives and friends, and from reading practically everything ever written by him or about him. Mr. Cunningham devoted two years almost exclusively to this task, and interviewed at least a hundred of Mr. Rogers' friends and childhood associates).

ters, Clem Rogers liked to take Willie's bottle away from him and then hear him utter harmless cusswords his father had taught him. "Stop that, Clem Rogers!" the boy's mother would order. "Why, it'd make you sick to hear it!"

What Mrs. Rogers hated most was that her husband usually picked times when there was "company" present to start this act. Women neighbors were always calling on her, for she was popular with them. They liked her funny stories and her dry wit. As in the case of Mark Twain, it was from his mother that Will derived much of his sense of humor.

Wrought Havoc to Rogers Ranchhouse

She was religious, however, in spite of her levity. Clem's working on Sunday was a thing that always hurt her. Talk as she might, he persisted in it. All she could prevail upon him to do was to "ask the blessing" at the table. To please her Clem would do so, and then, during the meal, swear like a sailor!

Willie outgrew his "cusswords" with the help of his mother. And then he learned to walk. What havoc was wrought in the Rogers ranchhouse when Willie was able to go prowling about!

What he liked best to explore was his sister Sallie's box of cosmetics. Sallie, now 18 and through school, was teaching.

He was too short to reach the box if he stood on the floor, so as he grew strong enough he pulled out a drawer from the bottom of the bureau, and stood on it. He daubed himself with powder until he looked like a baker.

Negro Taught Him How to Twirl Rope

When his mother found him and jerked him away he complained, "But I got to have some put-on-ya-face. I GOT to." As a man, when he got into the theater, he had access to all the "put-on-ya-face" he wanted, and never used it.

In rearing Willie and keeping him out of trouble, Mrs. Rogers had

the help of a colored cook, Rhoda, and the cook's married daughter, Babe Walker.

Babe's husband, Dan, taught the boy the first he knew about roping. "Now, now, Willie. That ain't the way to do it. Hold yo' rope thisaway," and he would demonstrate. "Try it ag'n."

Willie did. He was somewhat proficient when Mrs. Charley Robinson of Talala came one day to see the Rogers' new baby-grand piano. Willie rode into the dining room astride a stick horse, and began to rope at everything he could. First a chair, then a passing sister—"Willie," threatened his mother, entering, "you put that rope up or I'll take it and wear it out on you!"

Willie, not aware that he would one day make his living by twirling his rope, kept right on at his sport. His mother started for him and he roped her.

"Willie!" "Now will you be good?" Willie is said to have asked her. "You have to promise to be good and not spank me or I won't let you go."

By the age of 5, argue the specialists, a child's character has been pretty thoroughly shaped. But if Willie's character was shaped, his life wasn't, and in 1885 something happened that was to have an effect as long as he lived.

(TOMORROW: HIS WIDENING WORLD.)

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STAMFORD CHILDREN TO HAVE FROLIC THURSDAY

STAMFORD, Aug. 24.—The Sunshine Special, annual fun frolic for children sponsored by the Stamford Exchange Club, will be held next Thursday. Children will meet at the city auditorium and join the fleet of cars headed by the Sunshine Special locomotive, which will parade the streets of Stamford and head for the Texas Cowboy Reunion grounds for the party.

Swimming will be enjoyed at the municipal swimming pool. Refreshments of ice cream, soda water and iced lemonade will be served. Several hundred children attend the party annually.

H. G. Andrews is in charge of the arrangements.

Rogers and Post Receive Tributes From the Clergy

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 24.—In reverent memory of Will Rogers and Wiley Post, ministers over the city last Sunday devoted their sermons to tribute, anecdote and eulogy of the beloved pair who met death last week in an Alaskan air crash.

Among those who spoke of the pair and part of their sermons are: Rev. Arthur H. Wurtele of St. Thomas Episcopal Church—"Because the world needs imagination and laughter, Will Rogers became one of the most beloved and respected Americans in his generation."

Rev. Glenn R. Phillips, president of the Los Angeles Ministerial Association and pastor of the First Methodist Church of Hollywood—"The deaths of Rogers and Post have cast a gloom over the world. Although I did not know Will Rogers, I feel as if I have lost a personal friend."

Rabbi Mayer Winkler of Community Synagog—"In the passing of these two great personalities the whole Nation suffers irreparable loss. Wiley Post wrote for himself a glorious chapter in history of aviation. The name of Will Rogers, America's most beloved and most popular figure, will go down in history as the great philosopher of the age."

Rev. Hugh Walker of the First Presbyterian Church—"We have lost a wonderful man. Mr. Rogers was not an ordained minister, but he was an ordained minister of righteousness, good will and good cheer."

STARR COUNTY POOL TO GET TEN TESTS

M'ALLEN, Aug. 24.—King-Wood Oil Company of Mission and McAllen has contracted to drill 10 tests in the shallow pool of Starr County in porcion 15.

EVANGELIST TO PREACH

Evangelist Fred McClung of Fayetteville, Ark., will preach Tuesday night at the North Side Church of Christ.

Kind Words for

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

some great land chemist, and Rex says its a great thing. I am going to get him to ship me a car load of it to California, feed some of it to my horses and make em run faster, some on the Alfalfa to make it grow, and another few spoons full on my Chili Con Carne.

It's good as dear old Bill Fields, (who has been sick and I hope he is well—he is next to Chaplin, the screen's greatest comedian), well, as Bill Fields would say, its "Good for man or beast" or plant or fowl.

Rex was a-telling me about a famous man that is Mayor of Vancouver, that he predicts great things for. As he says, this fellow is attracting attention all over Canada and even to England, that he is really smart and has the solution of the "Way Out." He must have something, he couldnt fool Rex.

Well, Alaska was certainly glad to see him. They remember up here, none of this one-day sensation like down in Cuckooland.

Well, Wileys got her warmed up. Les go.

Will Was Cheerful, Wiley Was Nervous

Editor's Note—This article was mailed from Seattle just before Will Rogers and Wiley Post took off for Alaska.

BY WILL ROGERS.

Well, all I know is just what little I see behind this old Lockheed's wings. It's a Sirus wings, Lockheed body, three-bladed pitch propeller, big Wasp engine. Wiley calls it "Aroro-Borelaus." I call it "Post Toasty."

It's a beautiful morning in Seattle, Wash. Wiley and Mrs. Post have been here a few days getting the ship from wheels to pontoons. I have had a mighty pleasant and lovely 24 hours here. Everybody terrible nice and accommodating, fine hotel, lots and lots of tourists coming in and out. Some that have been to Alaska, some that are going, some that have been to the Yellowstone, some that are going. Seattle is a great travel corner. Mrs. Post and Wiley and I drive out to the field. It's a combination land and water airport, called the

WILL ROGERS SAID---

Editor's Note: Messages with which Will Rogers delighted readers for The Star-Telegram for years prior to his death are being selected at random and reproduced.

Suggested by W. A. Daniel, Dublin, Texas:

SANTA MONICA, Cal., Nov. 30, 1933.—Today would be an awful good day to not get in bad with either side on this gold. What I mean by that is not to mention it at all. I have always heard the old expression, "Where there is a lot of smoke there must be fire." Well, I don't believe that holds good, for there is certainly a terrible lot of gold arguments, where there is not an ounce of gold. Now the above don't offend either side does it? Or does it offend both sides?

Suggested by Mrs. D. L. Adair, Gorman, Texas:

SAN ANTONIO, Oct. 6.—I been flying, train riding, automobile and horseback and buggy riding over Texas for 33 years and I've never seen a tenth of it. If it had been Europe, 80 wars would have been fought over it. There is single ranches here bigger than France. Counties bigger than England. Saddle horse pastures big as Alsace Lorraine. The lakes of Switzerland would be buffalo wallows in Texas. It's located between Mexico and the U. S. to keep Mexico from annexing the United States.

It's so far to town that the cowboys who started in to vote for "Teddy" arrived in time to register for "Franklin." Its "Vatican" is the town of Uvalde, its pope is John Nance Garner. Its sole industry is international politics. It's so big that no one Governor can handle

it. They have to have a man and his wife. It's the only State where a Republican has to have a passport to enter.

Yours,
WILL.

P. S.—They would use California for a telephone booth down here.

Suggested by Mrs. W. L. Hurst, 2612 Azle Avenue:

BEVERLY HILLS, Dec. 31.—Well, the old year is leaving us flat, plenty flat. But in reality it's been our most successful year—it's took some of the conceit out of us. We had enjoyed special blessings over other nations, and we couldn't see why they shouldn't be permanent. We was a mighty cocky nation. We originated mass production, and mass produced everybody out of a job with our boasted labor-saving machinery. It saved labor, the very thing we are now appropriating money to get a job for. They forgot that machinery don't eat, rent houses, or buy clothes. We had begun to believe that the height of civilization was a good road, bathtub, radio and automobile. I don't think Hoover, the Republicans, or even Russia is responsible for this. I think the Lord just looked us over and decided to set us back where we belonged.

Yours,
WILL.

Suggested by Ray Lasater, Aledo, Texas:

BEVERLY HILLS, Cal., March 8. "I am glad it was me instead of you, Mr. President." I hope they use that. No tombstone in America could carry a finer tribute. His courage, his fighting spirit, were great. But most of all his devotion to his family during his battle for life endeared Mayor Cermak to his adopted country.

On another train returning home forever goes Tom Walsh to Montana,

whose epitaph might read: "Fairness lost a friend, crookedness lost an enemy." But it's only the inspiration of those who die that make those who live realize what constitutes a useful life.

Yours,
WILL ROGERS.

BEVERLY HILLS, Cal., Nov. 21. All I know is just what I read in want ads. I see where they say Wall Street is coming back. Yep, coming back for more. They figure people about had time to save up another little dab. That's one good thing about the rascals though. They always give you warning when they are coming. There ought to be some way figured out just what it takes to support that whole gang (in the manner in which they are accustomed) then charge everybody in the U. S. so much and deduct it from their salary. That would eliminate all speculation, and everybody would know where they stood.

Yours,
WILL ROGERS.

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 31, 1929.—Sure must be a great consolation to the poor people who lost their stock in the late crash, to know that it has fallen in the hands of Mr. Rockefeller, who will take care of it and see that it has a good home and never be allowed to wander unprotected again. There is one rule that works in every calamity, be it pestilence, war or famine, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The poor even help arrange it. But it's just as Mr. Brisbane and I have been constantly telling you, "Don't gamble." Take all your savings and buy some good stock, and hold it till it goes up. Then sell it. If it don't go up don't buy it.

Yours,
WILL ROGERS.

POINTS IN WILL ROGERS' EARLY LIFE

It wasn't a cowboy, but a negro handyman who taught Will to rope.

He went around the world as a young man and his letters from that trip, to be quoted later, are in good English, with none of the grammatical individualism for which he became famous.

He started learning to smoke once, and set the whole prairie on fire with the first match he threw down. That made him quit.

He was in a serious crackup in a plane in Chicago, and kept it a secret from the press, as well as his family.

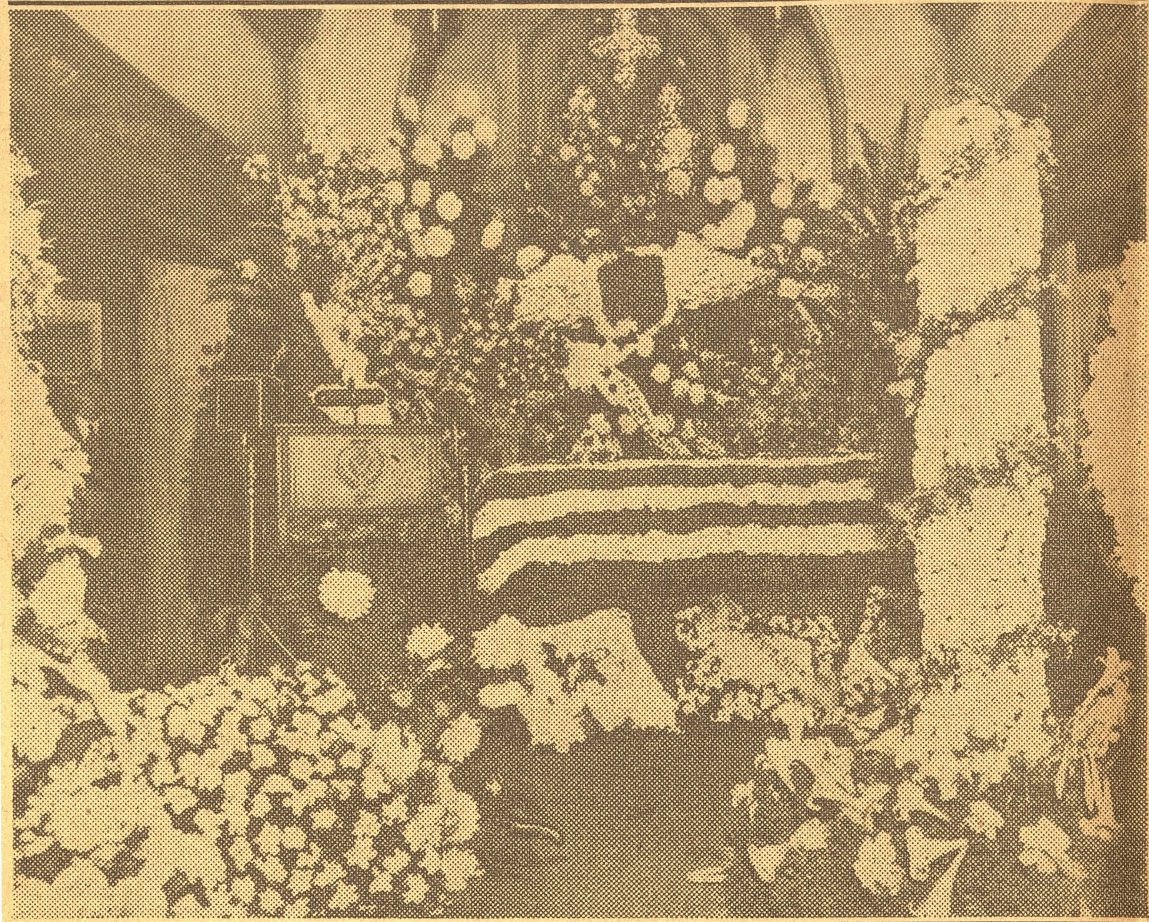
Will almost died from asphyxiation in a San Francisco hotel room, when he was a young man, because his roommate, who went to bed after Will was already asleep, blew out the gas on retiring.

Jimmy Walker once sent private word to Will Rogers to "lay off" kidding him.

Ziegfeld told Gene Buck to fire Rogers, who had not yet made a hit, and when Buck arrived to see Rogers, the cowboy asked for a raise in pay! A few weeks later he was able to set his own terms.

Will would have been a Broadway hit years before he got into the Follies, if on the night of his debut the Lusitania hadn't been torpedoed.

Rogers' Flower-Banked Casket



**Six Persons Hurt
As Cars Collide**

The flower-banked altar and casket of Will Rogers, world-famed humorist, are shown as they appeared in the Wee Kirk o' the Heather, Glendale, Cal., during funeral services Thursday.

**Child Killed, 4
Hurt in Crash**

THE Morning Star-Telegram presents the fifth of a series of pictures in the life of Will Rogers. The last of the series appears tomorrow.

WILL ROGERS' LIFE AS SEEN BY THE CAMERA

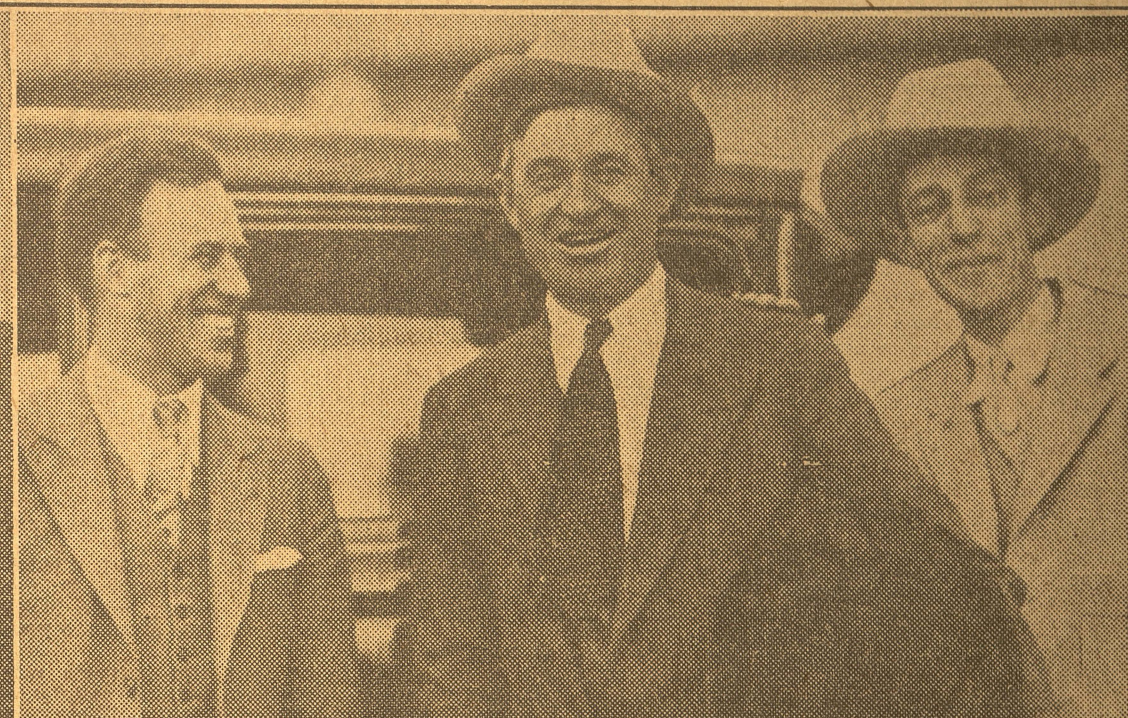
WILL gets cup—With W. T. Waggoner—Hawks, Rogers and Jimmie Rodgers, cowboy singer, whom the beloved Will described as a "distant son."



FORT WORTH—AND TEXAS—WON'T FORGET WILL ROGERS' AID IN RAISING RED CROSS drouth relief funds in 1931. With Capt. Frank Hawks piloting him in a Navy "Hell Diver," the comedian clowned before audiences in three Southwestern States and \$221,191 was paid to see him. Hawks, left, is shown here with Rogers as Walter B. Scott, chairman of disaster relief here, presented him with a cup in appreciation of services in the aid of sufferers.



THE LATE W. T. WAGGONER WAS ONE OF ROGERS' ADMIRERS. The cameraman caught them together on Rogers' drouth relief tour just after Will remarked: "The cowman and oil man have been the hardest hit—and you're both of 'em." Rogers, on his numerous trips to Fort Worth, had made hundreds of friends who mourned his death.



THIS PHOTO WAS MADE ON JAN. 30, 1931, WHEN ROGERS CAME HERE WITH THE Revelers, nationally famous quartet, and presented a benefit show at the Worth Theater, which produced \$18,350 for drouth relief. He is shown here with Captain Hawks, left, and Jimmy Rodgers, right, one of the entertainers on the program, who Rogers described as "a distant son." Fort Worth led the State in the amount paid to see the wisecracking Rogers.