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REMINISCENCES OF WILL ROGERS AT THE
REPUBLICAN CONVENTION WHICH NOMINATED
HERBERT HOOVER

by

A Delegate

The press members, which included Will Rogers, sat very close to our delegation. Will's seat was on the front row, so we had a clear view of him all through the convention. I can still see the unruly lock of hair hanging down on his forehead -- the twinkling blue eyes -- the wide mouth in a perpetual grin.

When there was a lull in the proceedings and that vast audience, filled with representatives from every state in the Union became restless, Will would begin with his antics. Once he rose up in his seat and gave a speech imitating a noted public character. Not a sound did he make; the whole thing was in pantomime. The audience roared with laughter.

Again in the corridor of one of the hotels, among a group of friends, he took a comb from his pocket, parted his hair in the center, slicked it down, took out an imaginary compact and went through the act of making

up his face. Then he gave a speech imitating a prominent woman politician. The women in the group took it good naturedly.

During the convention, a riot broke out on a street near the convention hall, and before the disturbance could be quelled (as I recall it), two policemen were killed. Will gave a benefit performance for their families at one of the theaters in the city. The night of the benefit, the weather was very hot. Before the end of the program, several women rose from a box -- one of them Alice Roosevelt Longworth -- and started to leave. Will yelled out, "Don't go, Alice, you haven't seen my rope act yet."

Every eye in the crowded theater immediately focused on Mrs. Longworth's box. Embarrassed, she dropped in her seat and a look of annoyance spread over her face, but she was soon smiling at Will's antics. One simply could not stay annoyed long at him.

A prominent New York woman, with the assistance of many other notable women, gave, in one of the hotels, a reception to all the women delegates. The doors leading to the reception room were posted with placards reading "No Men Admitted".

Will Rogers, during the reception thrust aside one of the door keepers, and poking his head in, called out, "If you'll let me in, I'll promise to be a perfect lady." He didn't get in, however.

One day when conversing with a group of women, one of them asked him if Mrs. Rogers ever attended political meetings. Quick as a flash, he answered, "No, she's too busy knitting socks for her three men folks." As he spoke, his face became serious; one felt by the way he spoke and looked he did not approve of women in politics.

Dear, funny, lovable, unforgettable Will Rogers. Could any one who had the rare privilege of knowing him ever forget him?