

WILLIAM V. BOTTOM  
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GRANITE 3256

Aug. 17th., 1948.

Mr. Amon Carter  
Publisher  
Ft. Worth  
Texas.

Dear Mr. Carter:

The first for me to mention in this letter is: look at the enclosed news clipping and note to signature on the pictured page. WILL ROGERS.

This clipping gives the origin of the autograph album, and a few of the autographs so beloved by the public. At the top of the pictured page is the autograph of a Chinese General..... Our great humorist selected this page and wrote: I want my name on this page with.....(the general) for he did my washing."

Next signature is that of actor Bennett's. He wrote: "I too want on this page and regret very much that I wasn't privileged to do both their washing."

Next, Henry Duffy Wrote: "I am proud to have my name on the same page with a Chinaman and an Indian."

Mr. Carter, I'm 83 years of age and haven't a relative in the world to leave this book; so I'm offering the book for sale at \$2500.00. There are over 600 autographs in the book with twenty blank pages.

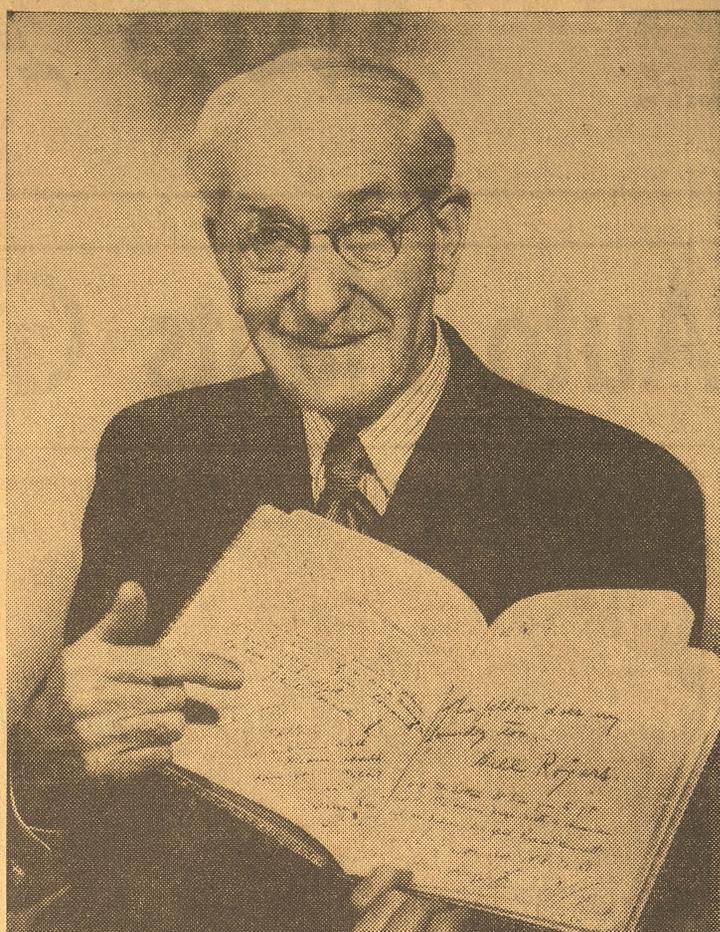
I've known of your great admiration for Will Rogers and thought you might buy my famous book.

If you are interested please let me know at your earliest convenient time.

Sincerely,

*William V. Bottom*  
for  
V.F.

By  
Vicki Foote, a friend  
from Dallas.



**BOOK OF MEMORIES**—William V. Bottom, Los Angeles print collector, with autograph book which contains the signatures of immortals of yesterday and today.

Times photo

## Autograph Book Lists Great of Theater Over 60 Years

Under Chinese Characters Drawn by Oriental Actor Will Rogers Wrote: 'This Fellow Does My Laundry Too'

Memories of the illustrious Sarah Bernhardt and the beautiful Lillie Langtry . . .

Of the great Edwin Booth and Adelina Patti and John Drew . . .

All these, and other immortals of the stage and opera, are recalled in the pages of an autograph book owned by William V. Bottom, Los Angeles print collector.

### DATES BACK TO '80'S

A veritable index to the famous stars of yesteryear, the book is one of the most complete of its kind, dating back to the '80's in the first names to appear in the unique collection.

So distinguished are those who have written their signatures in the volume that it is one of the few autograph books in existence which contemporary artists seek out to append their own names, as a mark of honor.

### BERNHARDT'S MESSAGE

"I've never had to ask anyone for an autograph," explains Bottom. "When they look through its pages and see all the immortals already there they deem it a favor to write their own names."

In possession of members of his family since its inception, the book was acquired by Bottom two decades ago. He has added the names of noted persons in the arts during that period.

The great Bernhardt, in the opening page, penned the message: "Life is beautiful; but to me death is still more so."

Said Patti, the operatic star: "The one and only form of music is melody. No music is conceivable without melody, and both are absolutely inseparable."

On the same page on which Edwin Booth wrote his name, and John Drew and the Barrymore family added their, Clarence Muse, the Negro singer, wrote: "I dare to tread on this page among supreme artists—but I dare because of my great love for the theater and its great souls."

May Robson recently inscribed: "It makes me feel young again to be with so many of my friends of long ago."

Mei Lan Fang, the eminent Oriental actor, penned his autograph in Chinese. Beneath the picture letters Will Rogers, the great humorist, added: "This fel-

low does my laundry, too." Still lower on the page Richard Bennett, the actor, appended: "It took you to get me on the same page with a Chinaman and an Indian." And at the very tag-end Henry Duffy put in: "I wish I could do all their laundry."

### OLD-TIMERS IN BOOK

Mary Anderson, Shakespearean actress of bygone days; Minnie Palmer, actress of the '80's; Joseph Jefferson, Lawrence Barrett, John McCullough, Fanny Davenport, Denman Thompson and scores of others whose names are known to all who are devotees of the Thespian art, are also there.

When Elisabeth Rethberg, opera star, looked through the book she wrote her name and said: "I tell you very humbly that this is one of the great honors of my life." Similar sentiments were expressed by Feodor Chaliapin, Max Reinhardt and Geraldine Farrar.

Bottom had not decided what to do with the book. Because of the historical period it embraces he believes it might possibly belong in a museum.