

# 15,000 Make Pilgrimage to Claremore To See Will Rogers Statue Unveiled

By **ROBERT FREELAND**  
Of The World Staff

CLAREMORE, Nov. 4.—More than 15,000 visitors from seven states made the annual pilgrimage to the Will Rogers memorial here today in observance of the late humorist's 71st birthday.

Highlight of the day-long tribute was the unveiling and presentation of an equestrian statue—a gift from Amon G. Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Shortly after noon Mrs. James B. Rogers, wife of Rogers' youngest son, Jimmie, stepped from a platform on the west side of the memorial building and pulled a string which unveiled the life-size statue of Will astride his favorite horse, "Soapsuds."

Present were Gov. Roy J. Turner, Mr. and Mrs. Carter, Sen. Robert S. Kerr, Mrs. Electra Waggoner Biggs, the sculptress of Texas; Raymond Buck, Fort Worth, general counsel for American Airlines; Dr. Hodge McKnight, American's chief flight surgeon, and C. R. Smith, the airline's president and long-time friend of Rogers.

Smith presented the statue to the memorial on behalf of Carter. Gov. Turner accepted for the memorial and the people of Oklahoma.

"I am glad to be in Claremore among the neighbors and friends of Will Rogers," Smith said.

"The personality of Will was such that every man called him neighbor but Oklahoma and Texas occupied the place of his greatest affection," he said.

Smith recalled an evening he spent many years ago in Will's home in California.

"I was there because Amon Carter invited me. It was an enjoyable

evening with only Will, Amon, Fred Stone and myself present.

"Will believed it was not far from Heaven to earth and those up there could look down on us here. I hope that is so and that Will is aware of the strong and lasting affection we have for him and of our purpose today to express respect for a great American by the dedication of this splendid bronze statue," the airline president said.

Present for the anniversary celebration, were five members of the Will Rogers Memorial commission including N. G. Henthorne, Tulsa, chairman; Ewing Halsell, Vinita, treasurer; W. M. Harrison, Oklahoma City, secretary; Morton R. Harrison, Tulsa, and W. E. Sunday, Claremore. Bill Rogers, Beverly Hills, Calif., Will's son, and Ralph Talbot, Tulsa, were unable to attend.

A second gift from Carter was unveiled during the ceremony. It was a bust of Rogers—a duplicate of the figure on the horse.

The equestrian statue, "Riding Into The Sunset," is a cast of the original done by the sculptress in 1942.

A memorial service by the Pochontas club—a group of elderly Cherokee women—was conducted near the statue in the memorial rotunda.

Mrs. J. W. Hammett, grandmother of Claremore's mayor and president of the club, laid the wreath at the foot of the statue.

Mayor James Hammett spoke briefly, then introduced Gov. Turner.

At 10 a. m., the Will Rogers Day parade got under way for a march from the downtown area to the memorial a mile away. The parade included 24 bands from high schools in Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri. Eighteen

roundup clubs and dozens of old-timers who were close friends of Rogers marched in the procession.

Oldtimes included Charles Wolford and Del Walker, Oologah; Gordon Lane, Claremore; Charlie Harris, Oologah; Dave Faulkner, Claremore, and Ted R. McSpadden, Nowata. Jimmie Rogers rode in the parade with his father's friends.

A noon barbecue attracted more than 8,000 persons on the memorial grounds. They consumed a ton of beef donated by Rogers—county ranchers.

The Claremore Chamber of Commerce was host to band directors at a luncheon in Will Rogers hotel. Each director was presented a trophy.

Johnny Lee Wills and his band broadcast at noon.

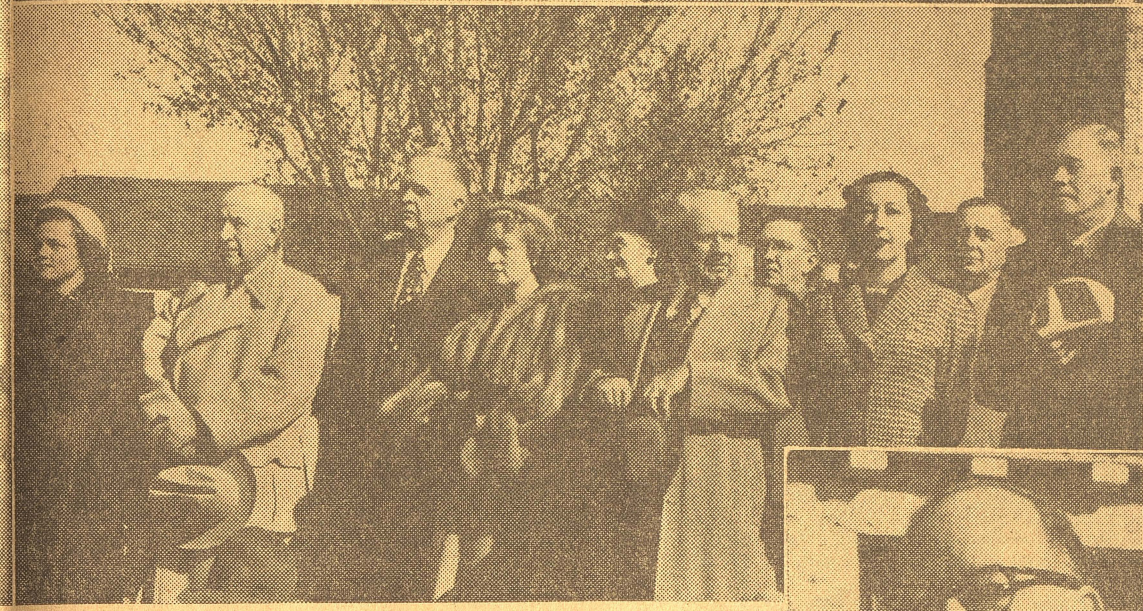
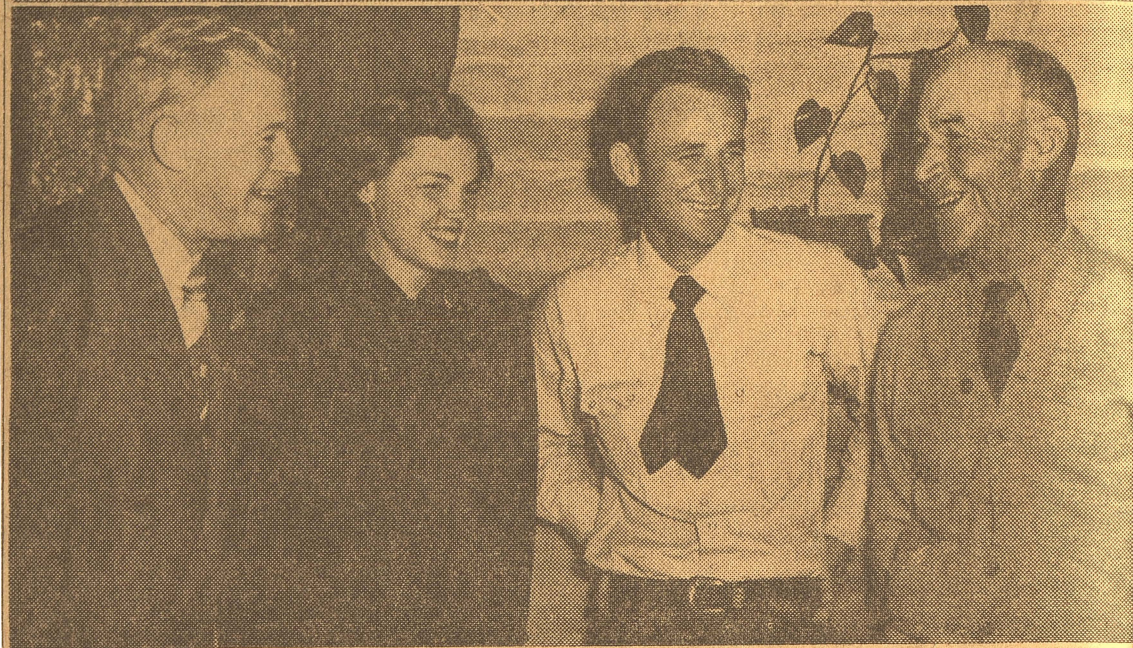
Mrs. A. L. Fisher, Enid, divisional president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and Mrs. W. E. Sexton, Tulsa, presented a plaque to the memorial during the afternoon in behalf of Clem Rogers, Will's father, who was a member of Gen. Stan Waite's Cherokee Mounted Division, Co. G.

N. G. Henthorne, editor of the Tulsa World and Memorial chairman, accepted the plaque for the commission.

The Will Rogers Roundup Club of Claremore held a steer roping contest at 2:30 p. m. along with other rodeo activities at the arena at Lake Claremore.

A quarter-horse sale at 7:30 p. m. at the Rogers county sales barn, and dance at 9 p. m. at the armory closed out the day's activities.

Glen Condon, Tulsa radio newscaster who has presided at the memorial observances since the ground-breaking in 1937, was master of ceremonies at the dedication and presentation of the Rogers statue.



## SCENES AT ROGERS DAY PROGRAM

Cowpokes, business executives, and dozens of notables were among the thousands present for the 12th annual Will Rogers Day observance at Claremore Saturday. The anniversary marked the late humorist's 71st birthday. Upper left—A group of old timers doff their hats before the equestrian statue given by Amon G. Carter, Fort Worth publisher. They are left to right, Dal Walker, Oologah; Gordon Lane, Claremore; Ed Wofford, and Charlie Harris, Oologah. Upper right—Mrs. W. E. Sexton, left and Mrs. A. L. Fisher, state president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy present a plaque to the memorial in memory of Will's father, N. G.

Henthorne, Tulsa World editor, and chairman of the Will Rogers Memorial commission, accepts the gift. Lower left—Members of the Rogers family chat with Gov. Roy J. Turner. Left to right are Gov. Turner, Mrs. James B. Rogers, Will's daughter-in-law, Jimmie, his son, and T. R. McSpadden, Nowata. Lower right—This was a scene during the dedication and presentation of the statue. Left to right are Mrs. Rogers, Amon Carter, Sen. Robert S. Kerr, Mrs. Carter, Ewing Halsell, member of the new statue to the memorial on behalf of Carter. Gov. Turner. C. R. Smith, lower right, president of American Airlines, presented the new statute to the memorial on behalf of Carter.

—World Staff Photos

## OU Co-Ed Badly Hurt In Norman Car Crash

NORMAN, Nov. 4 (P)—Peggy Cabeen, 19, University of Oklahoma student from Chickasha, was injured seriously last night in an automobile accident 4½ miles south of Norman.

She is the daughter of Chickasha Justice of the Peace H. W. Cabeen. The Highway Patrol said that Miss Cabeen was riding in a car driven by Oliver C. Van Hoesen, 21,

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## SCHOOL TO AID HANDICAPPED

New Okmulgee A-M Branch Center to Offer Vocational Training





—World Staff Photo

## TRIBUTE TO WILL ROGERS

Highlight of the 12th annual Will Rogers Day observance at Claremore yesterday was the unveiling of an equestrian statue of Rogers—a gift from Amon G. Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and long-time friend of the late humorist. The statue is the work of Mrs. Electra Waggoner Biggs, Texas, and New York sculptress. Mrs. James B. Rogers, Caliente, Calif., wife of Rogers' son, Jimmie Rogers, unveiled the statue. More than 15,000 persons participated in the day-long activities. (Related story and pictures on page 1, section 2.)