



The Papers of Will Rogers: From Broadway to the National Stage September 1915–July 1928

Will Rogers Jr.

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In the early years of his performing career, Will Rogers was a vaudeville performer of limited prominence. Around the age of thirty-five, however, this Oklahoma cowboy philosopher shed his role as local stage entertainer and moved toward fame as a Broadway star and nationally beloved humorist. This documentary history, volume four in the definitive five-volume Papers of Will Rogers, reveals Rogers's personal and professional transformation during what may have been the most productive period of his diverse career.

Between 1915 and 1928—the years covered by this volume—Rogers developed his unique monologues of topical humor, sampled the relatively new medium of radio, and pursued a career in silent films. He also tried his voice in sound recordings, witnessed his work as a writer reach millions of readers of daily newspapers, became one of the most sought-after speakers on the dinner circuit, and embarked on a three-year tour of the nation's lecture halls.

In addition to Rogers's personal correspondence with family members and friends, editors Steven K. Gragert and M. Jane Johansson present more than one hundred letters and telegrams to and from people Rogers touched both inside and outside public life, including prominent figures in politics, show business, literature, industry, government, publishing, and the arts. Much of this material, gleaned from private collections, interviews, manuscripts, and sound recordings, has never before been published.



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