

Photo of the Month

Betty Blake Rogers



Photo: Betty, Will, and their children in Beverly Hills, California, early 1920s. (Negative #N002415)

Born near Rogers at Silver Springs in 1879, Betty Blake first met Will Rogers while recuperating from an illness at her sister's Oklahoma home. After Betty returned to Rogers, the couple corresponded for nearly eight years. Because of qualms about a life in show business, Betty initially resisted Will's proposals of marriage. After their marriage in 1908, she reconsidered and began to encourage and guide Will's career.

Betty recognized Will's unique talents as a humorist. She encouraged him to talk during his vaudeville roping act, to go on the lecture circuit, and to write. Will often bragged about his wife, remarking that, "People came to see me, but they went away remembering Betty."

Will, Betty, and their children kept close ties to Rogers even after Will became famous, often staying at the Blake family home. After Will's death in 1935, Betty devoted much of her time to public life as she worked to memorialize her late husband, including writing a 1941 biography. Betty died three years later and was buried next to her husband at Claremore, Oklahoma.