

ROGERS OF THE GAZETTE

1953 – 1954

(CBS)

A Radio Series Broadcast Log

By: Stewart Wright

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Audition Show: "Will Rogers, Country Editor."
First Show: 07/08/1953.
Last Show: 01/20/1954.
Shows Broadcast: 27.
Length: 30 minutes.

SERIES BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION:

In the 1952 motion picture "The Story of Will Rogers," Will Rogers Jr. played his Father: American vaudevillian, humorist, syndicated columnist, social commentator, and motion picture actor Will Rogers. As a result of the popularity of the movie, CBS aired a 1953-54 radio series: *Rogers of the Gazette*. The series was a light drama focused on the daily activities of a fictional small town newspaper owner who published The Illyria Weekly Gazette. (Spelling of Illyria is taken from scripts for the series.)

This series was an example of Art imitating Life. From 1935 to 1953 Will Rogers Jr., Bill as he preferred to be called, owned and operated a weekly newspaper and was the editor/publisher. The newspaper was not located in a small town in America's Heartland, but rather in Beverly Hills, CA: *The Beverly Hills Citizen*. Bill also worked as a foreign correspondent, covering the Spanish Civil War during 1936 and 1937.

SPONSORSHIP:

Rogers of the Gazette was aired on a sustaining basis by CBS. Only the broadcast of 10/15/1953 had a sponsor: the Plymouth division of the Chrysler Corporation.

CAST AND CREW:

Primary Cast:

Will Rogers owner and editor of The Illyria Weekly Gazette played by Will (Bill) Rogers Jr.

Maggie Button Will's assistant played by Georgia Ellis.
Doc Clemens Illyria's town doctor played by Parley Baer and Howard McNear (1 episode only.) (Note: name also spelled as Clemmens.)
Jill Rogers Will's daughter played by Merry McGovern.

Guest Cast:

As Norman Macdonnell was the director/producer of the series, many long-time members of his "Stock Company" appeared on the series.

"Stock Company" members included: John Dehner, Harry Bartell, Vic Perrin, Howard McNear, Helen Kleeb, Jeanette Nolan, Virginia Gregg, Eleanore Tanin, Lawrence Dobkin, Vivi Janiss, Byron Kane, John Stephenson, Michael Ann Barrett, Edgar Barrier, Lois Corbett, Sam Edwards, Sammie Hill, Joseph Kearns, Jack Kruschen, Richard Beals, and Ann Morrison. Other actors also appeared.

Crew:

Director/ Producer:

Norman Macdonnell.

Writers:

Kathleen Hite, Les Crutchfield, E. Jack Neuman, Ray Gibson, James Henderson, and E. Jack Neuman and Walter Brown Newman.

Announcers:

Roy Rowan, Bob Lemond, and George Walsh.

Sound Effects:

Ray Kemper, Clark Casey, Tom Hanley, John James, and others.

Music:

Rene Garriguenc – composer, Wilbur Hatch – conductor and composer, and Rex Koury – conductor.

LOG:

Schedule:

Rogers of the Gazette experienced three broadcast day and time changes during its run. The log is divided into sections with the day and time of broadcast listed at the beginning of each section. All broadcast times are for the Eastern Time Zone.

Episode Listings:

All Broadcast Dates and Times, Episode Numbers (EP.) and Titles are from the series Scripts and were verified using other sources. The Scripts for Episodes 01 through 03 and 05 are untitled. Episode titles were not announced during the broadcasts.

Episodes in Circulation:

24 of the 27 Broadcasts Episodes are currently known to be in circulation. Common collector-created episode titles are shown in Square Brackets [].

Audition Show:

An audition show, "Will Rogers, Country Editor," was recorded sometime in May, 1953. Only the first half of this audition is in circulation. A modified version of this script was later used as the first episode of the series.

Pre-Recording of Episodes:

All Dramatic Portions (actors dialog and sound effects) of the episodes of this series were pre-recorded anywhere from a few days to several weeks *before* their actual broadcasts. The music and announcer's dialogue for most episodes were usually added on the day of the broadcast. This method of pre-recording the Dramatic Portions of a broadcast and later adding the music and announcer dialogue was known as "Partial Transcription." This method was commonly employed as tape was replacing disks as the preferred transcription medium. Tape recordings allowed easy editing of "blown lines."

Rehearsals That Weren't:

Episodes 01, 02 and 05 are available as Broadcast versions and so-called "Rehearsal" versions. These "Rehearsals" are actually "Partial Transcriptions:" unedited, Pre-Cut (pre-recorded) tape recordings of the dramatic dialog and sound effects that include "blown lines" and corrections. The "blown lines" were later edited out of the tape. The music and announcer dialog were added to the edited, pre-recorded dramatic dialog and sound effects on the day of the broadcast.

The so called "Rehearsal" recording of Episode 03 is from an unedited tape from over a month before the broadcast date with all cast & crew present on the Pre-Cut Date including the music personnel and announcer.

WEDNESDAY – 9:30 TO 10:00 PM

| DATE | EP. | TITLE |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 07/08/1953 | 01 | Untitled ["Newspaper Being Taken Over" or Lance O'Neal, Troublemaker" or "Lance O'Neil: Troublemaker"] Unedited, Partial Transcription version also available that was Pre-Cut on 06/10/1953. |
| 07/15/1953 | 02 | Untitled ["Jimmy Reynolds Story" or "The Jimmy Reynolds Story" or Second Hand Suit"] Unedited, Partial Transcription version also available that was Pre-Cut on 07/03/1953. |
| 07/22/1953 | 03 | Untitled ["Dirty Politics" or "Town Council Election" or "Town Council Meeting" or Election"] Unedited, Transcription version also available that was Pre-Cut on 06/12/1953. |
| 07/29/1953 | 04 | Polly Pellerton ["Surprise Engagement"] |
| 08/05/1953 | 05 | Untitled ["That Taylor Boy"] Unedited, Partial Transcription version also available that was Pre-Cut on 07/30/1953. |
| 08/12/1953 | 06 | Round Robbin ["Land Deal"] |
| 08/19/1953 | 07 | Better Be Good (<i>Episode Not In Circulation</i>) |

| | | |
|------------|----|--|
| 08/26/1953 | 08 | Journalism Major & Minor ["C.J. Griffith, Journalism Student" or "C G Griffith Journalism Student" or "Journalism Student"] |
| 09/02/1953 | 09 | Bessie Richards Story (<i>Episode Not In Circulation</i>) ["The Bessie Richards Story "] |
| 09/09/1953 | 10 | Founders' Day (<i>Episode Not In Circulation</i>) ["Founder's Day"] |
| 09/16/1953 | 11 | John's Story ["Illyria Box Lunch" or "Illyria Box Supper"] |
| 09/23/1953 | 12 | Henderson's Story ["Farm Sale Day" or Farm Day Sale"] |

THURSDAY – 8:30 TO 9:00 PM

| DATE | EP. | TITLE |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 10/08/1953 | 13 | Eudora Correspondent ["Leah's Eudora Notes"] |
| 10/15/1953 | 14 | Barbara's Return ["Maggie & Barbara" or "Maggie and Barbara"] |
| 10/22/1953 | 15 | County Fair ["Eula Horner & The County Fair" or ""Eula Horner and The County Fair""] |
| 10/29/1953 | 16 | Town Band ["The Old Coronet" or "The Old Cornet"] |
| 11/05/1953 | 17 | Music Hath Charms ["Toast Of Vienna - Gretchen March" or "The Toast Of Vienna"] |

WEDNESDAY – 10:00 TO 10:30 PM

| DATE | EP. | TITLE |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 11/11/1953 | 18 | Letter From A. Lincoln ["The Town Clock" or "Town Clock"] |
| 11/18/1953 | 19 | Do It Now ["Do-It-Now Editorial"] |
| 11/25/1953 | 20 | Strain For G-String ["The Princis Reopens" or "The Princess Theater Reopens"] |
| 12/02/1953 | 21 | Fire Engine ["The Longest Week Of The Year"] |
| 12/09/1953 | 22 | Pink Christmas ["Pastel Christmas Trees" or "Passtel Christmas Trees"] |
| 12/16/1953 | | PRE-EMPTED |
| 12/23/1953 | 23 | Jill's Baby ["A White Christmas In Illyria" or "White Christmas In Elyria"] |
| 12/30/1953 | 24 | Double Trouble [Investegative Reporters" or Investigative Reporters" or "Investigative Reporters-twins"] |
| 01/06/1954 | 25 | Intense Writer |

- 01/13/1954 26 ["The Novelist" or "Novelist" or "Poet"]
Mr. President
["Something Going On In Illyria" or "Something Going On In
Elyria" or "Big Secret"]
- 01/20/1954 27 Prize Winner
["Something's Troubling Will" or "Columbia University"]
NOTE: The title of this episode refers to a contest held by
CBS Radio Network that offered a tuition scholarship for the
best script for *Rogers of the Gazette* submitted by a student
of the Columbia U. Graduate School of Journalism. The
winning was submitted by Ray Gibson.

SOURCES CONSULTED:

Radio Broadcasts:

Rogers of the Gazette Broadcasts 1953-1954.

Scripts:

Broadcasting, E. Jack Neuman, and KNX Collections
American Radio Archives
Grant R. Brimhall Library
Thousand Oaks, CA
and
Television and Radio Scripts of Kathleen Hite
Special Collections and University Archives
Wichita State University Libraries
Wichita, KS

Newspapers and Periodicals:

Daily Radio programming listings 1953-1954:

Los Angeles Times

New York Times.

Articles:

Racine Journal - Times – Racine, Wisconsin – June 26, 1953.

Chronicle Telegram – Elyria, Ohio – July 10, 1953.

Broadcasting Magazine

Various 1953 issues.

People – November 26, 1979.

Other:

Norman Macdonnell

Show and Cast Lists.

Radio Historical Association of Colorado.

Compact Disc Library Listing.

Internet:

The Humongous Old-Time Radio Database Search Engine

<http://www.old-time.com/humongousdb/index.php>
Jerry Haendiges Vintage Radio Logs
"ROGERS OF THE GAZETTE" – January 16, 05
<http://www.otrsite.com>
Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774 – Present
ROGERS, William Vann, Jr.
<http://bioguide.congress.gov>
July 1988 interview of Will Rogers Jr. by the President of the Beverly Hills
Historical Society.
<http://www.youtube.com>
Lieutenant Will Rogers Jr.'s Service in World War II
<http://www.historynet.com>
The American Experience America and the Holocaust People & Events
Will Rogers, Jr. (1911-1993)
<http://www.pbs.org>
William Vann Rogers Junior
<http://www.willrogershighschool.com>
Wikipedia – Will Rogers, Jr.
<http://en.wikipedia.org>