

# BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

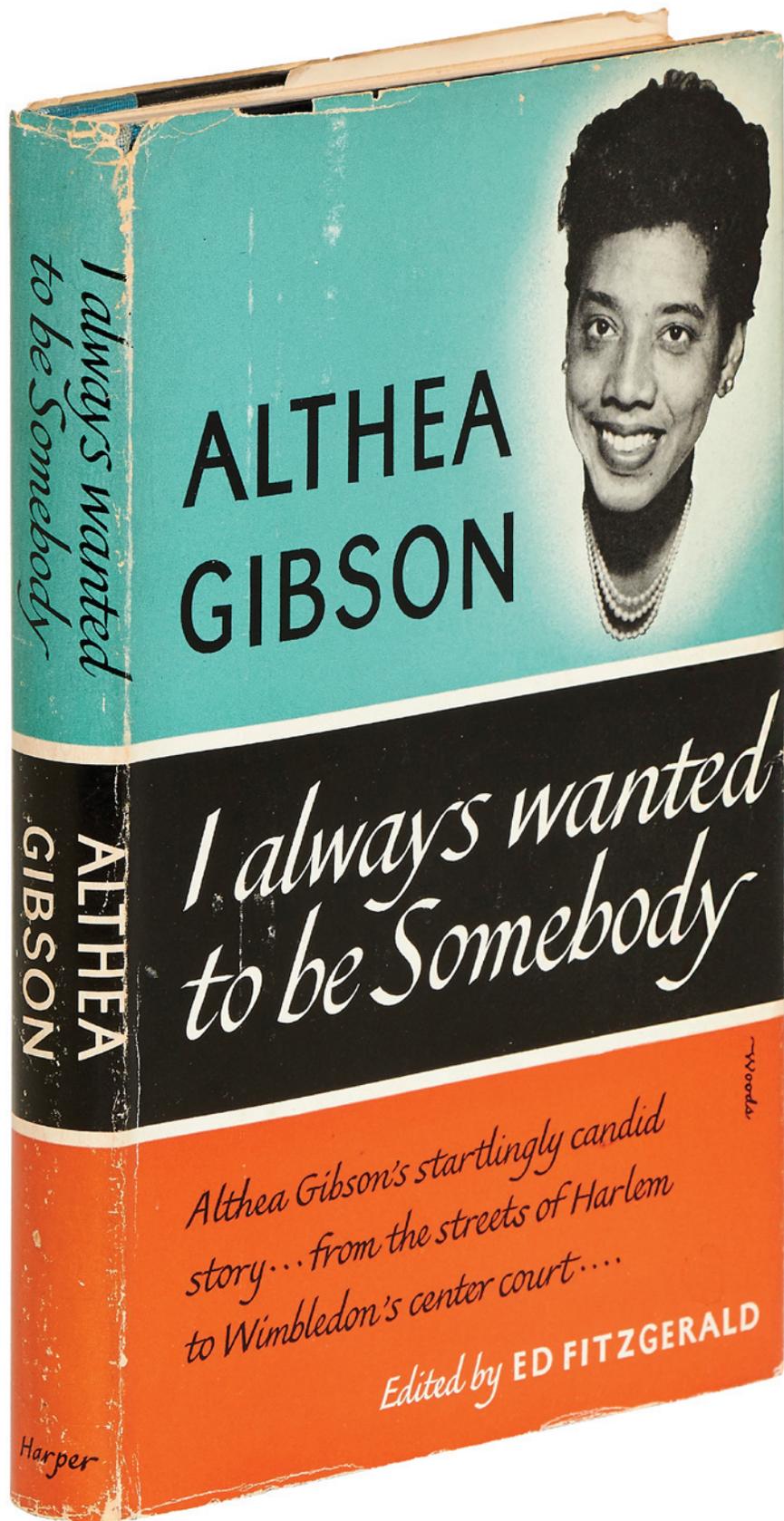
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## “Minorities Win”

**Althea Gibson**

*I Always Wanted to Be Somebody*

New York: Harper & Brothers (1958)



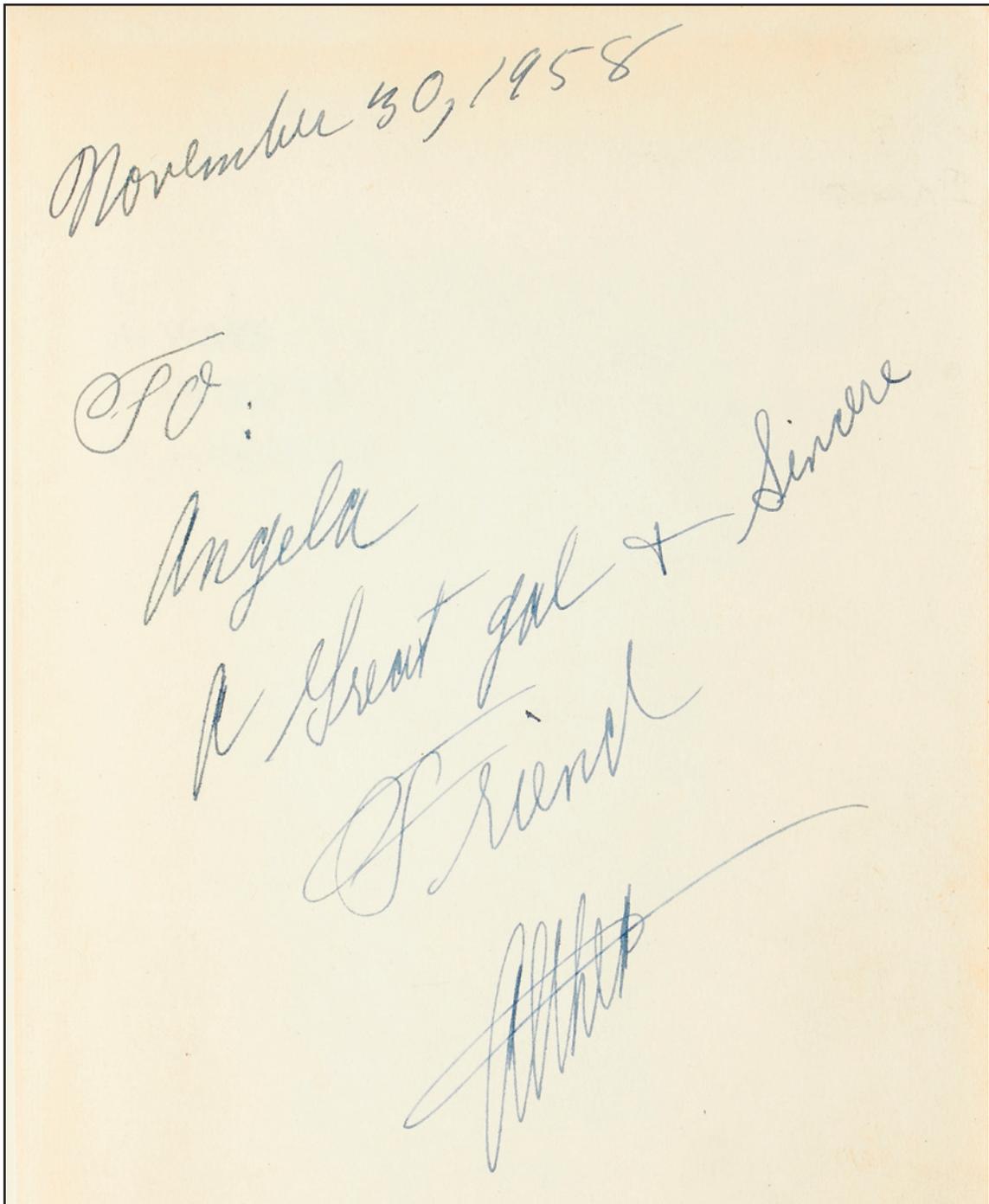
First edition. Octavo. Corners bumped and a bit of wear on the boards, very good in slightly rubbed very good price-clipped dustwrapper with a tiny nick. The tennis star's candid autobiography inscribed to her doubles partner.

Gibson, born in South Carolina and raised in Harlem, learned to play paddle tennis there and eventually tennis. She was the first African-American to play in the U.S. Nationals (the precursor to the U.S. Open) in 1950. In 1956, Gibson became the first African-American to win the French Open, while also winning, with Angela Buxton, the doubles titles at both the French Open and Wimbledon. In 1957, she won the Wimbledon singles and doubles titles, as well as the U.S. Nationals singles and mixed doubles titles; in 1958, she again won the U.S. Nationals singles title and the Wimbledon singles and doubles titles. She retired to turn professional because (according to the autobiography), “my finances were in heartbreaking shape... you can't eat a crown.” When professional tennis didn't pay the bills, Gibson became, in 1964, the first African-American woman to join the Ladies Professional Golf tour.

This copy is inscribed by Gibson in the year of publication to her 1956 doubles partner, Angela Buxton: "November 30, 1958. To: Angela, A Great Gal & Sincere Friend. Althea." Buxton, a British Jew, had her own obstacles to overcome getting onto the professional tennis court, and she retired due to a wrist injury after her 1956 championship wins with Gibson. Their victory at Wimbledon, after coming together as partners when no one else would play with either of them, was heralded in one British newspaper, in very small type, under the headline, "Minorities Win."

The friendship between Gibson and Buxton would last a lifetime. In 1995, when Gibson was ill and destitute, she confided to Buxton that she was contemplating suicide. Buxton led a fund-raising campaign on Gibson's behalf that allowed Gibson to live out her remaining eight years in relative comfort.

The title of the book comes from Gibson's quote: "I always wanted to be somebody. If I made it, it's half because I was game enough to take a lot of punishment along the way and half because there were a lot of people who cared enough to help me." An excellent association copy of a towering figure in the history of African-American sports, Inscribed to one of those people who cared enough, and helped. [BTC#407442]



November 30, 1958

PO:

Angela  
A Great gal & Sincere  
Friend

Althea