



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Magic scrapbooks and posters

1851-1936, undated

*T-Mss 2011-31

Summary

Creator: New York Public Library

Title: Magic scrapbooks and posters

Date: 1851-1936, undated

Size: 2.7 linear feet (16 volumes and 5 oversized folders)

Source: This items in this collection were acquired by the New York Public Library from various donors--most unidentified-- over several decades of the early 20th-century.

Revision History: Removed Saram Ellison scrapbooks to create a new collection. Added Houdini poster to Series II

Abstract: The Magic scrapbooks collection contains a significant amount of articles, clippings, correspondence, ephemera, photographs and posters pertaining to magicians, mentalists, conjurers and escape artists from the 19th- and early 20th-centuries, particularly during the Golden Age of Magic.

Conditions Governing Access:

Posters in this collection are available for consultation by appointment only. Please email theatre@nypl.org to arrange viewing.

Preferred citation: Magic scrapbooks and posters, *T-Mss 2011-31. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: Multiple languages

Processing note: Many of these materials were catalogued individually with MZC classmarks when acquired by NYPL. This collection was assembled and reclassified with a manuscript call number in 2011.

Related Materials:

See also related collections: Dr. Saram R. Ellison scrapbooks (*T-Mss 1915-001); Houdiniana (*T-Mss 2016-010); and Houdini artwork (*T-Vim 2011-293).

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains a significant amount of articles, clippings, correspondence, ephemera, photographs, and posters pertaining to magicians, mentalists, conjurers and escape artists from the 19th and early 20th centuries, such as Albin, Brush, Dunninger, Germain the Wizard, Hardeen, Hardeen, Houdini, the Hermanns, Kellar, Laurant, Martinka & Co., Rouclere, Thurston and the Zancigs, among others.

Arrangement: The collection is divided into two series: Scrapbooks and Posters. Series I is arranged in chronological order. Series II is arranged alphabetically by performer.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Correspondence
Photographic prints
Posters
Printed ephemera
Scrapbooks

Subjects

Magic
Magic paraphernalia
Magic tricks
Magic wands
Magicians (illusionists)
Occultists

Names

Dunninger, Joseph, 1892-1975
Hardeen, 1876-1945
Herrmann, Adelaide, 1853-1932
Herrmann, Alexander, 1843-1896
Herrmann, Carl, 1816-1887
Houdini, Harry, 1874-1926
Kellar, Harry, 1849-1922
Thurston, Howard, 1869-1936
Zancig, Agnes
Zancig, Julius
Martinka & Co.
New York Public Library

Container List

Series I: Scrapbooks

- v. 1 **Scrapbook 1851-1872, undated**
Catalogs (Carl Willmann, C. Milton Chase's Midget Catalog, Carl S. Lohrey, Mr. J. Bland, Schultz Novelty & Sporting Goods Co. W.D. LeRoy, Peck & Snyder, and J. Theobald & Co.); and articles.
- v. 2 **Scrapbook 1865-1868, 1921-1930, undated**
Articles with a focus on lessons in magic, curiosities and puzzles; and a 1930 program for "Testimonial dinner tendered to Hon. Jams C Wobensmith by his Friends and Brother Magicians."
- v. 3 **Scrapbook 1867-1916**
Inscribed on title page "This scrap-book is added to Harry Houdini's wonderful library of magic lore by his friend Oscar S. Teale who came into possession of it after the demise of Mr. Waring." Contains correspondence; contracts; invitations; ephemera from the Society of American Magicians (New York); programs; clippings; military discharge papers for Andrew G. Waring; and notes from Oscar S. Teale.
- v. 4 **Scrapbook circa 1890s-1915, undated**
Photographs of the following: Guss Vincent; Wilbur Maud; Alexander Herrmann; Robert-Houdin; Haidee Heller; Charles J. Hagen; Signor Blitz; Raymond; Frederick Eugene Powell; Cagliostro; Bancroft; Frederick Eugene Powell; George Schulte; Dunninger; Louis Krieger; Wuh[?] Loo; Ward McDonough; Joe Dunninger; Harry Kellar; Adelaide Herrmann; group portrait including Dunninger and Saram Ellison (holding skull); Mildred Matthews; Howard Thurston; Carl Hertz; and unidentified. Some photographs are inscribed to Dunninger.
- v. 5 **Scrapbook circa 1890s-1915, undated**
Photographs of the following: T. Horn; Edwin A. Becker; Brown; Dunninger & Devlin (several); Imro Fox (several); Mildred Matthews of Dunninger & Co.; group portrait including Dunninger and Saram R. Ellison; Bernhardt Carlton; Alexander Herrmann; Adelaide Herrmann; Kellar; Houdini; Will Goldston; De Shone; Wallace Galvin; Schulte; Prof. Harrington; wands from the Saram R. Ellison collection; Okito; Carter; Burling Hull as Gilbert Galt; J. Zedo; Great Le Roy & Co.; Rider; Conger; [?]tregar; Mlle St. Claire with the Great Le Roy; Ray J. Fink; El-[?]; Alexander Herrmann [?] posed with other magician and skeleton; Arnold Belais; Herbert Brooks; the Nagyfys; Ruth Belmar; Raymond; Devant; E. J. Moore; A. Karlemann; the Great La Follette; De Mont; Workstel; Wu Lao; and unidentified. Many photographs are inscribed to Dunninger and several are inscribed to Clyde Powers.
- v. 6 **Scrapbook 1899-1915, undated**
Articles and advertisements from the following publishers and publications: Hamley Bros. Ltd. Entertainments, *Hamley's Book of Magic*, *Mahley's Book of Magic and Mystery*, Wilhelm Bethge Magdeburg, *Thayer's Catalogue Bulletin of Fine Magical Effects and Appartus*, *Catalogue of Mechanical Conjuring Apparatus*, *Sleight of Hand Tricks*, *Magical Illusions and Ingenious Puzzles*, *Hamley's Book of Magic/Mystery*, *Illustrated Catalogue of Conjuring Tricks &c*, *Hamley's list of Juggling Goods*, *Books on Magic*, *Vettiloquism*, *Spiritualism &c*, *Catalog of Inventions by Professor Joseph Bland*, *Hamley's Latest List of Novelties*, *Hamley's Latest List of Conjuring Tricks*, *Puzzles Novelties &c*, *Hamley's Xmas List of Novelties in Conjuring Tricks*, *Puzzles &c*, *Magical Palace of Conjuring Wonders*, *Price List of Mr. J. Bland's Best and Cheapest Conjuring Tricks*, *Magical Apparatus*, *Puzzles, &c, &c*, and *A Modern Handkerchief Act by Burling Hull*.
- v. 7 **Scrapbook 1902-1905, undated**
Catalog for tricks and props; *Encyclopedia Brittanica* pages on magic; advertisement and promotional materials; and a typescript lecture.
- v. 8 **Scrapbook 1902-1916**
Correspondence from Dr. Saram R. Ellison on behalf of the Society of American Magicians in his role as secretary; newsletters and ephemera from the Society of American Magicians; and clippings.
- v. 9 **Scrapbook 1902-1919**
Articles and clippings, photographs, notes and correspondence; advertising and promotional materials.
- v. 10 **Scrapbook 1903-1915, undated**
Thurston Press Book. Includes clippings and programs.

Series I: Scrapbooks (cont.)

- v. 11 **Scrapbook 1909-1915, 1929**
Articles from *Edwards Monthly*, *Die Magie*, *The Magic Mirrors* and *The Conjuring Record*.
- v. 12 **Scrapbook 1909-1930**
Articles and clippings; ephemera from the Society of American Magicians (New York); advertising and promotional materials; ephemera from the Temple Israel Forum; correspondence; and photographs.
- v. 13 **Scrapbook 1915-1929, undated**
Articles, promotional booklets for the Society of American Magicians, and catalogs.
- v. 14 **Scrapbook 1919**
Handwritten on title page: "The Ellison Collection of Wands--Presented to the Society of American Magicians by his intimate friend & Companion-Louis N. Donnatin. August 6, 1919"; written in pencil under title: "some are in later scrap book". Found under entry for Bartolomeo Bosco is a handwritten note: "The above is the truth, Harry Houdini"; Bosco entry: "A piece of stone 3 inches long, one end rounded. Presented by Harry Houdini, who says: 'I visited the grave of Bosco and found that the stone had at the bottom, his coat of arms, which were the 3 cups trick a ball and a wand, I found the head of the wand broken off and in looking in the tall grass I actually found the tip of the wand, which I will make you a present of '." "
- v. 15 **Scrapbook 1923-1926**
- v. 16 **Scrapbook 1928, 1936**
Thayer's Catalog of Quality Magic. Includes nos. 7 and 8.

Series II: Posters

Posters are available for consultation by appointment only. Please email theatre@nypl.org to arrange access.

- o. 1 *Printed by American Show Print Co. #8911*
The Incomparable Albini 1911
- o. 1 *Goes Litho Co.*
Brush the Mystic: the Hindu basket circa 1920
- o. 1 *Printed by Richardson & Foos Print, New York, N.Y.*
Dunninger at the Eden Musee (blue variant) circa 1913-1914
- o. 1 *Printed by The Carry Print, New York, N.Y.*
Dunninger at the Eden Musee (red variant) circa 1913-1914
- o. 2 *Printed by The Schmitz-Horning Co. Lithographers, #1614.*
Germain the Wizard circa 1908 (Poster is comprised of three individual horizontal sheets (top, middle, and bottom).)
- o. 3 *Printed by St. Paul's Printing Co., London, Eng., U.K.*
America's Sensation: Harry Handcuff Houdini, the jail breaker circa 1900
- o. 3 *Printed by U.S. Lithographic Co. Russell-Morgan Print, #9548*
Europe's Eclipsing Sensation: Harry Houdini, the world's handcuff king and prison breaker circa 1900
- o. 3 *Published by Cincinatti and New York: U.S. Lithographic Co. Russell-Morgan Print, #11384*
Harry Houdini's death-defying mystery, failure means a drowning death circa 1908
- o. 3 *Printed by St. Paul's Printing Co., London, Eng., U.K.*
Harry Houdini, the jail breaker: prison cell and barrel mystery 1906 May
- o. 4 *Printed by Great Western Printing Company*
Hill Magical Company circa 1900
- o. 4 *Printed by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Kellar the Great Magician 1894
- o. 4 *Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Kellar: Levitation 1900

Series II: Posters (cont.)

- o. 4 Kennedy Vaudeville Co. presenting Kennedy the Mystifier: No handcuff or
shackle, prison cell or lock can hold me undated
Includes playbill promoting the performance on Saturday, June 6, at Mack Hall, Peetzburg, New
Jersey.
- o. 4 *Jordan Show Print, Chicago, Ill.*
Laurant the Celebrated Magician circa 1900
- o. 4 *Label (incomplete) reads "This was purchased from The Crest Trading Company, New York,
N.Y. who supply everything for amusement..."*
Magician conjuring a woman from the smoke of a brazier, with imps, doves,
and rabbits circa 1900-1915
- o. 4 *Label reads "This was purchased from The Crest Trading Company, New York, N.Y. who supply
everything for amusement..."*
Magician with blindfolded woman and putti circa 1900-1915
- o. 4 *Printed by the Donaldson Litho Co., no. 2782.; with overlabel: Purchased from the Crest
Trading Company*
Magician with assistant, imps, goose, and rabbit circa 1900-1915
- o. 4 *[no printing information]*
The Great Rouclere: the original automobile mystery circa 1890-1910
- o. 5 *Printed by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Thurston the Great Magician: the famous Indian rope trick 1910
- o. 5 *Printed by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Thurston, Kellar's Successor 1908
- o. 5 *Printed by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Thurston, Kellar's Successor: the prisoner of Canton 1908
- o. 5 *Printed by the Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio*
Thurston, Kellar's Successor: the whirling crystal cage and mysterious
production 1908
- o. 5 *Printed by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati and New York.*
Thurston the Great Magician 1910
- o. 5 Thurston, World's Greatest Magician undated
Includes black and white line drawing vignettes, with descriptions, of various tricks performed by
Thurston.