



BHC-MSS 0011
Guide to the Schneider Collection
By Meghan Rinn
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Schneider, Albert K.

Title: Schneider Collection

Dates: 1897-1966 [bulk c. 1900-1940]

Quantity: 1 manuscript box, 3 oversize boxes

Abstract: Focusing primarily on artifacts from the Barnum and Bailey Circus, the Schneider Collection contains material from the circus after the death of P.T. Barnum and into the 20th century. Photographs of the Barnum and Bailey Circus abroad also feature heavily, giving insight into what the shows were like.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

Mr. Albert K. Schneider's family worked in the circus in the late 1890s and into the 1900s and beyond. His maternal grandfather William Strong painted signs, wagons, banners, and the like for the Barnum and Bailey Circus, and his step-grandfather, William Smith, worked as a veterinarian for Barnum and Bailey as well. As a result, Schneider grew up around circus people, and acquired a collection of circus material as he grew older.

Additional information about Schneider is limited, but he was involved with circus historians, as the notes regarding this acquisition mention a number of names active and involved with circus history during the 1980s. The collection was purchased from the Schneiders in 1984.

Scope and Content Note:

Some time ago, the route books that were a part of this collection were separated out and are housed on their own.

The content of the collection is primarily souvenir material from various Barnum and Bailey Circus sojourns abroad. This includes various seasons spent in Britain, and the circus' time in Germany in 1900.

Of note, however, is the three-dimensional material. The material primarily relates to animal care, and includes files for claws and hooves, dentistry instruments, and horse related equipment.

Arrangement note:

Material has been grouped by circus and non-circus material, with the circus material coming first. It is then arranged by genre.

Three-dimensional items are held in two separate boxes. Most material is kept together due to size.

However, the riding crops and scaler are housed separately, as the crops are made of bamboo and thus fragile, as well as the fact the items are long and thin, and thus need specialized housing.

Administrative information:

Provenance: Purchased from the Schneiders in 1984.

Preferred Citation:

Schneider Collection (BHC-MSS 0011), Bridgeport History Center.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal Names

Bailey, James Anthony, 1847-1906

Corporate Names

Barnum and Bailey--History.

Barnum and Bailey--People--1890-1900.

Barnum and Bailey--People--1900-1910.

Subject tracings

Circus animals--Pictorial works.

Circus animals--United States--History--19th century.

Circus owners.

Circus performers--1870-1880.

Circus performers--1880-1890.

Circus performers--1890-1900.

Circus performers--1900-1910.

Circus performers--1910-1920.

Circus performers--1920-1930.

Circus performers--United States.

Entertainers--1840-1890.

Entertainers--1890-1900.

Entertainers--1900-1920.

Elephant trainers

Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus

Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Combined Shows--1920-1930.

Genres

Manuscripts.

Photographs.

Detailed box and folder listing

Box 1

1. Correspondence, 1959 and undated
2. Menus from dinners given to the Barnum and Bailey Circuses, 1897, 1899
3. Tissue paper placemats from dinners given to Barnum and Bailey Circuses, c. 1890s-1900s
4. Circus postcards
5. Cartes de visite of Barnum performers, 1870s-1900s
6. Photograph of boat used to ship Barnum and Bailey circus to England, c. 1890s
7. Photographs of the Barnum and Bailey Circus in Germany

8. Set of circus negatives
9. Programs from the Barnum Festival, 1949, 1961, 1966
10. Bridgeport Sunday Post regarding the Barnum Festival, July 8, 1962
11. Clippings, Barnum related, c. 1960s-1970s
12. Madame Tussaud's exhibition, 1897 (Jenny Lind featured)
13. International Universal Exhibition Guide and Catalogue, Director General Imre Kiralfy, 1898
14. Jenny Lind material
15. Other advertisement collectibles
16. Photographs of #8 firehouse and Maplewood in Bridgeport, Connecticut
17. Cartes de visite, likely of Civil War soldiers
18. Photographs of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lynch
19. Clippings, general

Box 2

1. Photographs of Barnum and Bailey Circus in Germany, 1900
2. "A Peep at Buffalo Bill's Wild West" published by McLaughlin Brothers, 1887
3. Pear's Blotting Book, 1898
4. Scrapbook featuring clippings about Nellie Bly; Columbia Exhibition

Box 3

1. Veterinarian dental tools owned by William Smith
2. Filing tools for claws and hooves owned by William Smith
3. Needle used for animal care owned by William Smith
4. Set of 2 horse shoes, presumably from circus horses
5. Training bit, presumably from circus horses
6. Baggage horse equipment
7. Pins from fire horse blankets
8. Tights supposedly belonging to Eliza Dockrill (Madame Dockrill)
9. Set of pins from circus related material
10. Stopwatch used to time races around the ring owned by William Smith
11. 2 shaving razors
12. Whistle
13. Stamp or paperweight with P.T. Barnum's portrait
14. Souvenir ring

Box 4

1. Riding crops (2) owned by Todd Sloane
2. Scaler used to paint banners, wagons, etc. owned by Walter Strong