



BHC-MSS 0049

Guide to the Photograph Collection of “Dad” the Poli’s Theatre Doorman

By Meg Rinn, June 2019

Descriptive Summary

Creator: “Dad”

Title: Photograph Collection of “Dad” the Poli’s Theatre Doorman

Dates: 1920-1929

Quantity: ½ manuscript box, 1 oversize box

Abstract: This photograph collection features various autographed photos from stage stars of the 1920s, all dedicated to “dad”, a doorman at Poli’s Theatre during the 1920s. Research is ongoing to determine the identity of the doorman.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History

It is presently not possible to determine the identity of the doorman who is identified as “Dad” in all the autographs. The volume of images and varied stars make it clear that his job was a busy one and that his manner garnered him no small amount of affection from the various performers at Poli’s.

Sylvester Z. Poli owned a number of theatres in Bridgeport, including the Palace and the Majestic. It is unclear which one “Dad” worked at, as the only labeling on the original container, “Poli’s” could apply to the Palace, Majestic, or Globe, as Poli’s surname was in front of each. For a full history of Poli’s involvement with Bridgeport’s theatre scene, see BHC-MSS 0048 Bridgeport Theatre Collection.

Scope and Content note

The bulk of the collection consists of autographed headshots, all made out to “Dad” or some variation thereof (most frequently “Daddy.”). There are additional headshots of performers with no autograph or identification, and scant few promotional photographs from motion pictures. Most photographs date from the 1920s and reflect Bridgeport’s reputation as a popular theatre town.

Arrangement note

Arranged alphabetically by performer’s surname when known. Additional promotional photographs from films placed at end of collection.

Administrative information

Provenance: Transfer from Barnum Museum.

Preferred Citation:

Photograph Collection of “Dad” the Poli’s Theatre Doorman (BHC-MSS 0049), Bridgeport History Center.

Names and Subject Tracings

Corporate Names

Majestic Theatre

Poli's Globe

Poli's Palace

Subject tracings

Bridgeport, Conn.

Theatres

Detailed box and folder listing

Box 1

1. Autographed photos, B, 1920s
2. Autographed photos, C-H, 1920s
3. Autographed photos, I-R, 1920s
4. Autographed photos, S-Z, 1920s
5. Unknown performers, some autographed, 1920s
6. Promotional photographs, 1920s
7. Publicity photographs from motion pictures, mostly Paramount films, 1920s-1930s

Box 2

1. Oversized photographs, 1920s
2. Oversized mounted photographs from exhibit at Fairfield Museum, 1920s
3. Oversized mounted photographs from exhibit at Fairfield Museum, 1920s