Guide to the Ellis Family Theater Memorabilia Collection

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Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Ellis Family Theater Memorabilia Collection
Dates: 1887-1959
Identification: MS-0106
Creator: Ellis Family
Physical Description: 3.00 linear ft
Language of Materials: English
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Family History:
The Ellis Family theatrical history began in 1859 when Edward Charles Ellis, age 14, left home and made his stage debut as a blackface comedian. This performance marked the beginning of over 100 years in theater for the Ellis Family.

Beginning in approximately 1900, Edward's daughter, Edith Ellis, wrote three dozen plays for production on Broadway, elsewhere in the United States, and in London. Edward's son, also Edward Ellis, had a successful career on Broadway and went on to Hollywood. Granddaughter Ellis Baker acted on Broadway, performed the successful "Showoff" in London, and headed acting companies across America. She retired to Escondido, California in 1979.

Access Terms
This collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Family Name:
Ellis family -- Archives

Genre/Form of Material:
Personal Papers
Photographs
Publications

Personal Name:
Baker, Ellis, actress
Ellis, Edith, 1876-1961 -- Archives
Ellis, Edward Charles, b. 1845 -- Archives
Ellis, Edward, 1870-1952 -- Archives
Kelly, George, 1887-1974. Showoff

Topical Term:
Actresses -- United States -- Biography
American drama
American drama (Comedy)
Bijou Theater (St. Paul, Minn.)
Motion picture plays, American
Playbills -- Specimens
Theaters -- Minnesota -- St. Paul

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This collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation:
Identification of item, folder title, box number, Ellis Family Theater Memorabilia Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Scope and Contents
The Ellis Family Collection consists of theater and movie scripts by Edith and Edward Ellis, playbills, programs, reviews, photographs, and information about the Ellis family, specifically Edith Ellis. Also included are movie house ledgers, movie production picture magazines, posters, and promotional photographs from the Bijou Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota. Its connection with the Ellis Family is unclear; possibly the theater was operated by the Ellis Family.

Box 1, Folder 1  
"Adventure", an original play in three acts by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 2  
"Any Day" by Edward Ellis

Box 1, Folder 3  
"Any Night", a play in three scenes by Edward Ellis

Box 1, Folder 4  
"At the Grand Guignol", an eugenical playlet by Edward Ellis 1913

Box 1, Folder 5  
"Mrs. Jimmie Thompson" ("The Beautiful Liar"), a farce-comedy in three acts by Norman S. Rose and Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 6  
"Because I Love You", a play in one act by Edith Ellis, 1901; "Ben of Broken Bow," by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 7  
"Cavaler of the Streets" by Edith Ellis. Based on Michial Arlenes story in "These Charming People"

Box 1, Folder 8  
"The Charity Ball", an original comedy-drama for the screen by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 9  
"Cleopatra", a play in one act by Edith Ellis; "Contrary Mary," by Edith Ellis; "Dialogue From Dickens," inscribed by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 10  
"Drunkards Three", a playlet in two scenes by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 11  
"Fancy", a comedy in four acts by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 12  
"The Finished Story", a playlet by Edward Ellis; "The First Mrs. Fraser", a comedy in Three Acts by St. John G. Ervine

Box 1, Folder 13  
"Half a Lady", a comedy by Edward Ellis; "The Happiest Millionaire," by Kyle Chrichton; "The Judsons Entertain," by Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 14  
"If You Think It's So, It's So", synopsis of farce of same name by Edith Ellis and Oliver Erlen

Box 1, Folder 15  
"The Lady of Camellias", (a) by Edith Ellis. Based on the novel "La Dame aux Camillias' by Alexander Dumas

Box 1, Folder 16  
"The Lady of Camellias", (b) Edith Ellis

Box 1, Folder 17  
"The Lady of Paz", a dramatic comedy in two acts and six scenes by Edith Ellis. Based on the novel "These Generations" by Elinor Mordaunt (script, stage manager's notes, reviews)

Box 1, Folder 18  
"The Last Chapter", (a) a comedy of errors in an epilogue and three scenes by Edith and Edward Ellis. (script, postcard, reviews)

Box 1, Folder 19  
"The Last Chapter", (b) Edith and Edward Ellis

Box 1, Folder 20  
"The Man Higher Up" by Edith Ellis (synopsis only)

Box 1, Folder 21  
"Mary", scenario for film production based on the play "Any Night" by Edward Ellis. Produced at the Princess Theatre, New York
| Box 1, Folder 22 | "The Masked Ball", a farcical comedy adapted from the French by Edith Ellis. (script, reviews, program, stage and costume notes) |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | "Mrs. Oliver etc.", an original comedy by Edith Ellis |
| Box 1, Folder 24 | No 13 Washington Square", a farcical-comedy in four acts by Edith Ellis. (scenario only) From Leroy Scott's novel of the same author |
| Box 1, Folder 25 | "Oliver Twist" by Edith Ellis. ("a sketch from...") |
| Box 1, Folder 26 | "Perkins' Predicament", a film comedy in two reels by Edith Ellis (synopsis only) |
| Box 1, Folder 27 | "The Phantom Burglar", a comedy-dramatic sketch in one act by William Cary Duncan and Edward Ellis |
| Box 1, Folder 28 | "The Quality of Mercy", a television drama in four scenes by Edith Ellis |
| Box 1, Folder 29 | "The Scarlet Gentleman", a play in one act by Edith Ellis |
| Box 1, Folder 30 | "The Song" by Edith Ellis. Based on the short story by May Edginton |
| Box 1, Folder 31 | "The Strength of the Weak" by Edith Ellis (synopsis only). Played under the title of "May Man" by Mabel Taliafero, produced by Frederick Thompson from a novelette by Forrest Halsey |
| Box 1, Folder 32 | "Tin Wedding", a play in three acts by Edith Ellis. Based on the novel of the same name by Margaret Leech. |
| Box 1, Folder 33 | "The Untruth Tellers" a by Edward Ellis ("a sketch") |
| Box 2, Folder 1 | "Vespers", a play in four acts by Edith Ellis; "The Vinegar Tree," by Paul Osborn; "White Collar" by Edith Ellis |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | "The White Morning", a drama in four acts by Edith Ellis (scenario only) from Gertrude Atherton's novel of the same name |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | "The White Villa" by Edith Ellis. Based on "The Dangerous Age" by Karen Michaelis (including press reviews) |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | "Why Keep a Diary", a comedy (film version) by Edith Ellis. Adapted by Lazlo Fodor's "Lullaby" |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | "Without the Law", a mystery playlet in two scenes, by Edward Ellis |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | "Affairs of a Gentleman" by Edith and Edward Ellis (review only) 1934 |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | "Contary Mary" by Edith Ellis (announcement only) |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | "The Great Meados" by Edith Ellis (forward only) 1930 |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | "Imaginary Invalid" by Edith Ellis (playbills only) 1936 |
| Box 2, Folder 10 | "The Moon and Sixpence" by Edith Ellis (program, reviews, William Somerset Maugham calling card) |
| Box 2, Folder 11 | "The Point of View" by Edith Ellis-Baker (announcement only) 1903 |
| Box 2, Folder 12 | "White Collars" by Edith Ellis (postcards, playbills, reviews, see also oversize) 1925 |
| Box 2, Folder 13 | Ellis family photographs |
| Box 2, Folder 14 | Ellis Baker portraits (see also oversize) |
| Box 2, Folder 15 | Ellis Baker in theatrical roles-photographs |
| Box 2, Folder 16 | Other actors, actresses-photographs, some from original Ellis troop |
| Box 2, Folder 17 | Reviews of books transcribed by Edith Ellis: "Open the Door", "Incarnation...", "The Astral Plane" |
| Box 2, Folder 18 | Notes from Ellis Baker re. Edith Ellis and her works. (Apply to several of the scripts in box 1) |
| Box 2, Folder 19 | "Edith Ellis "Credentials" (resume) circa 1920 |
| Box 2, Folder 20 | Miscellany about Ellis family: papers written, articles about |
| Box 2, Folder 21 | Five Bijou Theater, St. Paul, Minneapolis ledgers (connection with Ellis Family is unknown. The theater may have started as a saloon in the late 1880s, evolved into an opera house and then movie theater by the 1930s) 1887-1950s |

| Box 3 | 4 photographs: Isabel Barring (1), Ellis Baker (3) |
| Box 3 | 1 program: "White Collars" 1925 |
| Box 3 | "The Story of United Artists Product, 1937-1938" (picture book) |
| Box 3 | "RKO Radio Picture Book" 1932-1933 |
| Box 3 | "Leaders of the Motion Picture Industry" (magazine) 1938 |
| Box 3 | "Greater Amusements: America's Foremost Motion Picture Regional Trade Journal" November 1938 |
| Box 3 | "Columbia Mirror" (magazine) July 1935 |
| Box 3 | 29 Public relations/releases photographs, primarily from Universal Productions: unidentified (including 1920s x-rated), "Rawhide Rangers," "Border Wolves," "Cain," "The Pace That Kills"
| Box 4, Folder 1 | Oversize
| Box 4, Folder 1 | 24 Movie posters (small size): "Rawhide Rangers" "The Fiddlin Buckaroo," "Border Wolves"
| Box 4, Folder 1 | 19 Movie posters (full size): "The Fiddlin Buckaroo," "Border Wolves," "Rawhide Rangers"