

P-249
Stan Laurel Collection

Repository:

Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Span Dates:

ca. 1910-1913

Extent:

.2 linear feet

Language:

English

Abstract:

In 1934 Stan Laurel donated a small collection of materials (clippings and photos) pertaining to his vaudeville days with the Karno Company where he served as Charlie Chaplin's understudy and occasional roommate. Chaplin published his collection of similar clippings and photos from the Karno days in his autobiographical *My Life in Pictures* (1974, Bodley Head Ltd.).

Conditions Governing Use:

Permission to publish, quote or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder

Conditions Governing Access:

Research is by appointment only

Preferred Citation:

Stan Laurel Collection, Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County
Museum of Natural History

Related Holdings:

P-181 Charlie Chaplin Collection
P-182 Chaplin Studio Collection
P-251 Rollie Totheroh Collection
GC 1187 Charlie Chaplin Scrapbook

Biographical Note:

Born Arthur Stanley Jefferson (the Laurel was added much later in his career) in England to a theatrical family in 1890, he was hired by Fred Karno to perform with one of his vaudeville troupes throughout Britain. During the troupe's 1910-13 tours of the United States, Jefferson served not only as the understudy to the show's star, Charlie Chaplin, but the two were also roommates on the road. Laurel later claimed that during these years, "Fred Karno didn't teach Charlie and me all we know about comedy. He just taught us most of it." Chaplin left the troupe during their 1913 tour to join Keystone Films. Jefferson continued on the stage, at one point as a Chaplin imitator, during the 'teens and into the 1920s. Laurel attained fame more than a decade after Chaplin when partnered with Oliver Hardy. Chaplin and Laurel remained in casual contact during their Hollywood days through Alf Reeves, who was Karno's, and later Chaplin's, business manager. After Reeves's death in 1946, however, contact was even more limited. Laurel appears only in a photo caption in Chaplin's autobiography, and the two never performed together after their 1913 American tour. Stan Laurel died in Los Angeles in 1965; Chaplin died in Switzerland on Christmas day, 1977.

Scope and Content Note:

14 items of ephemera. Most of the items are clippings from Karno performances from 1910 to 1913. There are a few photos of the Karno troupe circa 1910.

Container List:

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.	Clipping—"Early Birds," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
2.	Clipping—"The Wow-Wows," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
3.	Clipping—"The Wow-Wows," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
4.	Clipping—"The Wow-Wows," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
5.	Clipping—"A Night in a London Club," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
6.	Handbill—"A Night in a London Club," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
7.	Handbill—"A Night in an English Music Hall," from a 1910-13 Karno performance
8a.	Clipping—"A Night in a London Music Hall," from a 1910-1913 Karno performance
8b.	Clipping—"A Night in a London Music Hall," from a 1910-1913 Karno performance

9. Clipping—Karno performance showing Charlie Chaplin onstage
10. Note—Stan Laurel's handwritten note identifying 3 photographs (#11, #12, #13)
11. Photograph—Karno troupe with families on railway platform, June 1910
12. Photograph—Karno troupe on deck of the "S.S. Cairnrona," September 23, 1910
13. Photograph—Karno hockey team on roller skates, ca. 1910