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Circus Historical Society

## **Ink From A Circus Press Agent: Part Two**

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# 1885

*Charles H. Day's Ink From A Circus Press Agent: An Anthology of Circus History*, compiled and edited  
by William L. Slout

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Ben Maginley is a “May Blossom” with the Madison Square traveling company, playing Belasco’s latest and best. When I see Ben on the stage I can see double, without going out “to see a man” between the acts. The double is Ben’s other self - the clown of the circus ring as I used to know him; and when the well dressed villain of the play walks the stage, I look in vain for the ringmaster’s whip. Wonder if Parson Mallory of the Holy Madison Square ever saw Benjamin in the fool’s motley. (21) I don’t believe he did. Well then, he missed a sight. Ben used to crack a pretty wheeze expressly for the little folks; and then he’d sing a song that would make Col. Mapleson of Her Majesty’s Marines sick with envy. In Ben’s circus days he was manager and often is the time he has been stuck in the mud in the early spring and addressed words of consolation to the tired mules. As a circus manager, he was often liable to be blown down. As an actor, he might be blown up by the critics but the scribes will take kindly to the rotund comedian. Ben is a jolly soul and it is “worth the price of admission” to hear him laugh.

Last winter Benjamin was out West “acting out,” as the natives called it, in one of those truly good milk-and-water plays of brother Mallory. Attached to the theatre was an old cully who had traveled with Ben in the days of the Maginley & Carroll show. (22) His nibs was acting as the gallery officer and was proud to greet his old employer. It is probably a fact that the gallery guardian worked up half the business of the night by sounding the praises of Ben Maginley.

The eventful night came and Ben’s most enthusiastic admirer was the best listener in the house. But as the fates would have it, an intoxicated individual created a disturbance. The officer tried to pacify the infractor. Then the intoxicated individual argued the point, interrupting one of Ben’s best scenes. The play went on. So did the drunken guy. Then Ben rung into his lines the circus war cry, “Hey

rube!”

The only cully in the gallery prickled up his ears. Ben again interlarded, “Fake!”

The veteran complied with the request, to state it mildly. He knocked the noisy chap down and there was peace.