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Records of
The Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd.,
Gloucester Place, Wellingborough.

Accession 1978/102

The Palace Company was formed as a cinema and theatre company in 1910, by two brothers, Mr. C.H. Brown and Mr. G.W. Brown, builders of Wellingborough, with Mr. W.F.J. Hewitt, who was the manager of the company. The King's Palace, in Church Street, Wellingborough, opened on February 7th., 1910, showing electric pictures and variety acts, such as "Oto" the educated pugdog and "Kyoto" the Japanese contortionist, conjuror and juggler.

In 1911, the Palace Company opened the Palace Theatre in Rushden High Street and, in 1914, the Electric Theatre was also opened on the Market Square, Wellingborough.

In August, 1924, the three men formed a new private company, known as the Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd., consisting of the Palace Theatre, Wellingborough, with lock-up shops and offices in Gloucester Place, Park Road and Church Street, the Electric Theatre at Market Square, Wellingborough, the Palace Theatre in High Street, Rushden and land in College Street and Alfred Streed, Rushden, later used to build the Ritz Cinema. Mr. G.W. Brown, Mr. C.H. Brown and Mr. W.F.J. Hewitt became the directors of the company and by 1928, Mr. Leonard Hewitt had become joint manager of the Palace Company with Mr. W.F.J. Hewitt.

In the early 1930's, the Palace Company underwent changes. The Electric Theatre was renamed the Regal Cinema, the Old King's Palace became Roper's Garage and the new Palace Theatre opened in Gloucester Place. Of these theatres only the Palace Theatre in Gloucester Place, Wellingborough and the Ritz Cinema in College Street, Rushden remain today.

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The Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd.

(A) The Palace Theatre, Wellingborough

- 1 Theatre Takings Cash Book: Feb 1911-Aug 1912
Shows the amount of takings for each day's performances and the amount paid into the bank.
- 2 Theatre's Weekly Expenses Book: Oct 1915-Oct 1919
The theatre expenses are divided into categories:-
Staff - their names and wages
Orchestra - their names and wages
Stage - the Stage Manager, his wages and stage account
Petty Cash
Variety Acts - their names and amount paid to them
Drama - names of any plays that week, & with the percentage share of the
Revues takings received by the Rushden and Wellingborough Palace Theatres
Other Items - chocolate, billing, etc.
Does not include expenses for films.
- 3 Theatre's Weekly Expenses Book: April 1924-Aug 1929
Description as above.
With pencilled in total expenses of Wellingborough Palace, Rushden Palace and The Electric Theatre, Wellingborough.
Does not include expenses for films.
- 4 Monthly Account Book: Feb 1910-Oct 1913
Total receipts are recorded on the left and expenses on the right are recorded separately. From March 1912 the receipts are divided between those from the Wellingborough Palace and those from The Electric Theatre.
Expenses include those for films.
- 5 Monthly Account Book: Oct 1913-Dec 1916
Description as above.
Receipts divided between those from the Palace and those from The Electric Theatre.
- 6 Yearly Accounts Book: March 1911-March 1915
Total receipts recorded on the left with takings from the Palace, Electric Theatre and Kings Hall and other receipts.
Total expenses recorded separately on the right.

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(cont.)

(B) The Electric Theatre, Wellingborough

April 1913-Oct 1914

- 1 Weekly Account Book:
Total receipts for each week recorded on the left and expenses recorded separately on the right.
At the back are weekly accounts of other theatre companies:-
Nov 2nd-7th, 1914 - Kettering Coliseum Stock Co.
Nov 23rd-28th, 1914 - Picturedrome, Hitchin
Nov 30th-Dec 5th, 1914 - Kettering Coliseum
Dec 7th-12th, 1914 - Theatre Royal, Guildford
Dec 14th-19th, 1914 - Palace, Derby

(C) The Palace Theatre, Rushden

March 1913-Aug 1915

- 1 Theatre's Weekly Expenses Book:
The theatre's expenses are divided into categories:-
Staff - their names and wages
Attendants - their names and wages
Band - their names and wages
Petty Cash
Hall Cleaner & Billing
Artistes - the names of the acts and the total amount paid to them with the name of the play (if any) in which they took part.
This includes names of any films shown.

- 2 Weekly Account Book:
Total receipts recorded on the right for each week.
Total expenses recorded separately on the left.
Advertising accounts recorded at the back, i.e. those firms paying for advertisements on the fire curtain, in the corridors and in the programme.

- 3 Monthly Account Book:
Total receipts for each week recorded on the left.
Expenses recorded separately on the right.
From July 1918 weekly sheets of receipts for each performance included.

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The Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd.

(cont.)

(D) The Palace Company

- 1 **Weekly Account Book:** June 1913-Feb 1918
Total receipts for the whole company recorded on the left.
Total payments out for each theatre on the right, plus miscellaneous out-payments.
- 2 **Book of Film Bookings:** Aug 1917-Feb 1922
Shows the names of films and the dates they were shown in The Palace, Wellingborough, The Palace, Rushden and The Electric Theatre.
- 3 **Theatre Takings Book:** Sept 1924-Feb 1931
Gives the name of the production (film, play, opera or pantomime) and in which theatre it took place, the name of the company giving the production or hiring out the film, the dates of the production, the takings for each performance and the share of these taken by The Palace Company less miscellaneous expenses.
- 4 **Lists of films offered for hire to The Palace Company by various National Film Companies:** 1920-21
Lists have been annotated by Mr. W.F.J. Hewitt.
- 5 **List of seat prices at The Regal, Wellingborough.** c.1940
- 6 **Two photographs of W.F.J. Hewitt.**

(E) Correspondence

- 1 **H. Wheatley, Manchester to L.J. Hewitt - request for secondhand cinema seats and reply.** Oct 1942
- 2 **Mrs. B. Matthews of Communist Party of Great Britain to Manager of The Ritz Cinema, Rushden - request for use of the cinema to hold a public meeting and reply.** Nov 1942
- 3 **Pathe Pictures Ltd. to L.W. Hewitt re: reducing the cinema's share of the takings from "The Suspected Person".** Feb 1943

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The Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd.

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(E) Correspondence (cont.)

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| 4 | R.K.O. Radio Pictures Ltd. to L.W. Hewitt
re: booking of "The Gay Falcon" at Rushden
Palace and reply. | Feb 1942 |
| 5 | L.W. Hewitt to Dyson Bros. Ltd. re: sending
of wrong roll tickets. | Sept, Oct & Nov, 1942 |
| 6 | L.W. Hewitt to Messrs. Kalee Ltd. re:
adaptor gear for Regal. | Oct 1940 |
| 7 | H.C. Banks, County Education Officer to
Manager of Palace Theatre re: reference for
Robert Birkby (then stage manager and care-
taker at Theatre) for post as caretaker of
Victoria Council Schools and reply. | Nov 1940 |
| 8 | L.W. Hewitt to Younger Publicity Service Ltd.
re: worn advertising film. | Dec 1940 |
| 9 | Henrion Carbons Ltd. to W.F.J. Hewitt re:
return of substandard carbons and reply. | Jan 1941 |
| 10 | W.F.J. Hewitt to A.S. Campbell re: sending
him letter concerning patron's tearing of
coat on protruding seat screw. | Feb 1941 |
| 11 | "Blue Pencils", A.A. Brigade Concert Party,
Knowle, Warwicks. to W.F.J. Hewitt - with des-
cription of their show and request for concert
at Palace, Wellingborough and reply. | Nov 1941 |
| 12 | W.F.J. Hewitt to Ministry of Labour -
request to keep cashier Mrs. E.G. Curtis
in his employ. | Dec 1941 |
| 13 | W.F.J. Hewitt to A. Barker giving him his
notice and A. Barker's wages receipt. | Dec 1941 |
| 14 | W.F.J. Hewitt to Charles Hutson giving him
his notice. | July 1941 |
| 15 | S. Presbury & Co. Ltd. to W.F. Hewitt -
request to exhibit trailer film advertising
the United Friendly Insurance Co. and reply. | Sept 1942 |
| 16 | Paramount Film Services Ltd. to L.W. Hewitt
re: meeting to discuss film "Hoppity Goes
To Town" and reply. | Feb 1942 |

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(E) Correspondence (cont.)

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| 17 | British Lion Film Services Ltd. to L.W. Hewitt re: booking "Meet the Stars 5 & 6" and reply. | Feb 1942 |
| 18 | General Film Distributors Ltd. to W.F.J. Hewitt re: booking of "Appointment for Love" and reply. | Feb 1942 |
| 19 | W.F.J. Hewitt to Officer Commanding B Company re: lending land at junction of Park Road and Alma Street for Home Guard gun site. | April 1942 |
| 20 | Uniform Clothing and Equipment Co. to L. Hewitt re: order for new uniform and reply. | Aug 1940 |
| 21 | Publicity Films Ltd. to W.F.J. Hewitt re: new type of advertising film and reply. | July 1940 |
| 22 | W. Aubrey, Blackpool to Palace Co. requesting position as Company Manager and reply. | Nov 1941 |
| 23 | Film Transport Co. Ltd. to Mr. Brown re: their having difficulty in maintaining deliveries in the Northampton area and reply. | Sept 1940 |
| 24 | E. Brown to Paramount Film Service Ltd. enclosing copy of above letter. | Sept 1940 |
| 25 | Kinematograph Renters Society Ltd. to Secretary of Palace Co. re: visit of inspector who found an irregularity at the cinema and reply. | Aug 1939 |
| 26 | W.F.J. Hewitt to Paramount Film Service Ltd. re: supplying of short films. | Jan 1942 |
| 27 | National Savings Movement to W.F.J. Hewitt re: their erection of a platform for Warships Week outside The Regal Cinema and reply. | Jan 1942 |
| 28 | Guy's Hospital to W.F.J. Hewitt requesting showing of an appeal film and reply. | Dec 1941 |
| 29 | Leon Underwood, Richmond Theatre to W.F.J. Hewitt requesting use of Palace for play "Lilac Time" and reply. | Nov 1941 |

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(cont.)

(E) Correspondence (cont.)

30	Empire Film Productions Ltd. to W.F.J. Hewitt request to show advertising film "Meet Mrs. Briton" and reply.	Oct 1942
31	Beck and Windibank Ltd. to Palace Co. re: supplying rubber buffer and reply.	Dec 1942
32	George Palmer, Cinema Specialist to Mr. Hewitt re: sending of slide lantern and reply.	Dec 1940
33	Claude Spencer, cinema rep. of the Shaftesbury Homes and Arethusa Training Ship to W. Hewitt with appeal to show film and reply.	Oct 1940
34	The Atlas Sprinkler Co. re: sprinkling system for Regal and reply.	Aug 1942
35	Central Electric Co. to The Palace Co. re: claims for lamps purchased by the Company.	Jan 1938
36	Circular from Ministry of Fuel and Power re: appointment of fuel watcher on the staff.	-
37	Eldorado Ice Cream Co. Ltd. to The Palace Co. re: overdue account.	Aug 1940
38	Sovereign Exclusives to L. Hewitt re: offer of two films.	June 1943
39	General Film Distributors Ltd. to Palace Co. re: sending film "Broadway".	Jan 1943
40	W.F.J. Hewitt to Cinematograph Exhibitors Association re: sending of M.O.I. films.	Jan 1943
41	W.F.J. Hewitt to Strong Electric Distributors Ltd. re: sending two mirrors for Strong Arcs to The Ritz.	Oct 1942
42	W.F.J. Hewitt to Burton Allton Ltd. re: soap permits (2)	Nov 1942
43	W.F.J. Hewitt to National Screen Services Ltd. re: sending trailer for "Tom Brown's School days".	June 1942
44	W.F.J. Hewitt to Younger Publicity Service Ltd. re: cheque.	Dec 1941

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(E) Correspondence (cont.)

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| 45 | W.F.J. Hewitt to Mr. Turland, Ranelagh Road, Wellingborough re: cessation of his free entry to the Regal. | Sept 1940 |
| 46-55 | W.F.J. Hewitt to National Screen Service Ltd. ordering film trailers. | Oct 1941
Nov 1941
Dec 1941
Jan 1942
Feb 1942
March 1942
June 1942
Aug 1942
Oct 1942 |

(F)

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|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | Xerox copy of poster bill advertising the opening night of The King's Palace, Church Street, Wellingborough. | Feb 7th. 1910 |
| 2 | Xerox copy of article from the Kinematograph Weekly about the formation of The Palace Company (Wellingborough) Ltd. | Aug 21st. 1924 |

March, 1978.