

JAMES WASHINGTON BELL (1890-1966) PAPERS, 1922-1961

Series 11/3/10/3

Boxes 1-3

Biography

James Washington Bell was born on August 26, 1890 in Boulder, Colorado, the son of James Washington Bell and Delphine Paradis Bell. Bell took a B.A. degree in Philosophy and Languages from the University of Colorado in 1912 and an M.A. degree in Economics and Government, also from the University of Colorado, in 1913. Harvard University awarded Bell a Ph.D. in Economics in 1918. His doctoral dissertation was entitled *Taxation of Railways in New England*. Bell received the Norlin Achievement Medal from the University of Colorado Alumni Association in 1938. In 1955, the University of Colorado awarded Bell an honorary LL.D. degree.

While working on his M.A., Bell was an assistant and instructor in Economics at Colorado. He was also a teaching fellow and tutor at Harvard from 1915 to 1918. From 1918 to 1919 Bell served in the American Expeditionary Force in France and after demobilization in 1919 with the American Red Cross in Paris.

Bell's first full-time academic appointment was as an Assistant Professor at Williams College from 1919 to 1923. Bell came to Northwestern as an Associate Professor of Money and Banking in 1923. He was promoted to Professor in 1929 and remained a Northwestern faculty member for the remainder of his career. He was appointed Professor Emeritus in 1955. Bell also served as a Visiting Professor at Ohio State University during the spring of 1955-1956 and at Southern Illinois University during the spring of 1958-1959. Bell taught seminars in Economics in India for the U.S. Department of State in 1958.

Bell held several administrative posts at Northwestern. He directed the Graduate Division of the School of Commerce from 1926 to 1937 and headed the School's Department of Finance from 1926 to 1941. Bell was a member of the Administrative Board of Northwestern's Graduate School from 1933 to 1937 and from 1937 to 1941 he served as Acting Dean of the Graduate School. He also served as Chairman of the Economics Department of the College of Liberal Arts from 1942 to 1951.

Bell was a member of several professional organizations. He served as Secretary-Treasurer of the American Economic Association from 1936 to 1962, he also edited the AEA's *Papers and Proceedings, Directory* and *Handbook*. He was a delegate and later President of the Conference of Secretaries of the American Council of Learned Societies. He was a founder of the Economists' National Committee on Monetary Policy in 1933 and served as its Vice-President from 1933 to 1949, as Acting President from 1949 to 1953 and as President from 1953 until 1966. Bell chaired the Research Council of the Institute of Economic Research from 1932 to 1933. He served as President of the Northwestern chapter of the American Association of University Professors (see Series 4/6/1), and was a Fellow of the Royal Economic Society. He was a member of Delta Tau Delta, Alpha Kappa Psi, Alpha Pi Zeta (see Series 4/6/2) and Beta Gamma Sigma fraternities. Bell also belonged to the University Clubs of Evanston and Chicago and the Harvard Club of Chicago.

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Bell served as Director for two Chicago banks: the National Bank of Commerce and the Citizens National Bank.

Bell's publications include *A Guide to the Study of Money and Banking* (third edition, 1935), *A Proper Monetary and Banking System for the United States* (edited with Walter Earl Spahr, 1960) and several articles and reports in financial and economic journals and in encyclopedias. Bell died in Evanston on December 21, 1966; interment was in Boulder, Colorado.

Description of the Series

The James Washington Bell Papers, comprising three boxes, are arranged in three categories: general correspondence, subject files and course files. The first folder in the series contains biographical materials and newspaper clippings.

The general correspondence, comprising only one-quarter of one box, is arranged at the folder level by year and within folders by date. The correspondence is mainly incoming and spans the years from 1939 to 1946. The bulk of this small amount of correspondence falls in the years 1940 and 1941. The correspondence of 1940 and 1941 largely concerns the activities of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies and especially the Chicago and Evanston chapters of the Committee. Bell took an active role in this Committee and spoke before the Evanston chapter on the "Economic Consequences of a Nazi Victory." The correspondence folder for 1941 includes Bell's notes for this speech. The folder for 1940 includes one letter to Bell from Adlai E. Stevenson (August 29) and one from U.S. Representative Ralph E. Church of Illinois (September 16). The 1941 folder contains one letter to Bell from Paul H. Douglas (September 30). This folder also contains correspondence concerning Bell's resignation as Acting Dean of the Graduate School. Correspondence from 1942 to 1946 is largely routine and often pertains to publications concerning economic issues sent to Bell by a variety of individuals and organizations.

The subject files comprise only two folders. The first folder concerns the American Economic Association and contains printed Reports of the Committee on Elections from 1947 to 1949 and Announcements of Meetings of the AEA from 1947 to 1949, 1954 to 1956, 1959 and 1961. The second folder concerns Northwestern's Commencement programs for 1944 and 1945 and contains memoranda, seating charts and academic procession orders for Baccalaureate and Commencement services.

The course files, spanning the dates from 1922 to 1947, by far comprise the bulk of Bell's Papers. These files generally contain syllabi, examination questions, grades and often seating charts for courses taught by Bell. There are also some materials for courses he did not teach. Some of the course folders also include correspondence and the folders for Bell's course on Money, Credit and Prices, conducted as a seminar include minutes of course meetings and student papers. The course files are arranged alphabetically according to course title: Bank Practice and Policy, Banking Systems and Money Markets, Corporation Finance, Money and

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Banking, and Money, Credit and Prices. Folders are arranged within these categories by year and sometimes within years by academic semester.

Provenance: The James Washington Bell Papers (Accession # 80-106) were separated from the Frederick Shipp Deibler Papers (Accession # 79-46; Series 11/3/10/2), which were transferred to the University Archives from Special Collections on March 23, 1979.

Restrictions: None.

Separations: Two photographs were removed to the James Washington Bell folder in the Archives Photographic Collection. One linear inch of printed pamphlets from various foundations and business and labor groups has been sent to Gifts and Exchange.

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Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Biographical Materials	
GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE			
	2	Correspondence	1939-1940
	3	Correspondence	1941
	4	Correspondence	1942
	5	Correspondence	1943
	6	Correspondence	1944
	7	Correspondence	1945
	8	Correspondence	1946
	9	Correspondence	n.d.
SUBJECT FILES			
	10	American Economic Association	1943-1944, 1947-1949, 1954-1956, 1959, 1961
	11	Commencement	1944, 1945
COURSE FILES			
	12	Bank Practice and Policy	1922-1923
	13	Bank Practice and Policy	1923-1924
	14	Bank Practice and Policy	1924 Summer
	15	Bank Practice and Policy	1924-1925
	16	Bank Practice and Policy	1925-1926
	17	Bank Practice and Policy	1926 Summer
	18	Bank Practice and Policy	1926-1927
	19	Bank Practice and Policy	1927-1928
	20	Bank Practice and Policy	1928-1929
	21	Bank Practice and Policy	1929-1930
	22	Bank Practice and Policy	1930-1931
	23	Bank Practice and Policy	1931-1932
	24	Bank Practice and Policy	1932-1933
	25	Bank Practice and Policy	1933-1934
	26	Bank Practice and Policy	1934-1935
	27	Bank Practice and Policy	1935-1936
	28	Bank Practice and Policy	1936-1937
	29	Bank Practice and Policy	1937-1938
	30	Bank Practice and Policy	1938-1939

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	31	Bank Practice and Policy	1939-1940
	32	Bank Practice and Policy	1940-1941
	33	Bank Practice and Policy	1941-1942
	34	Bank Practice and Policy	1945-1946
	35	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1927 Summer
	36	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1927-1928
	37	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1928-1929
2	1	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1929-1930
	2	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1930-1931
	3	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1931-1932
	4	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1932-1933
	5	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1933-1934
	6	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1934-1935
	7	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1935-1936
	8	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1936-1937
	9	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1937-1938
	10	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1938-1939
	11	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1939-1940
	12	Banking Systems and Money Markets	1940-1941
	13	Corporation Finance	1930, 1934
	14	Money and Banking	1922-1923
	15	Money and Banking	1923-1924
	16	Money and Banking, Summers	1923-1924, 1926-1929, 1931, 1933
	17	Money and Banking	1924-1925
	18	Money and Banking	1925-1926
	19	Money and Banking	1926-1927
	20	Money and Banking	1927-1928
	21	Money and Banking	1928-1929
	22	Money and Banking	1929-1930
	23	Money and Banking	1930-1931
	24	Money and Banking	1931-1932
	25	Money and Banking – Austin Scholars Program	1931-1932
	26	Money and Banking	1932-1933
	27	Money and Banking I	1933-1934
	28	Money and Banking II	1933-1934
	29	Money and Banking	1934-1935

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	30	Money and Banking I	1934-1935
	31	Money and Banking II	1934-1935
	32	Money and Banking	1935-1936
3	1	Money and Banking	1936-1937
	2	Money and Banking	1941-1942
	3	Money and Banking	Fall 1942-1943
	4	Money and Banking	Spring 1942- 1943
	5	Money and Banking	Summer 1943
	6	Money and Banking	Fall 1943-1944
	7	Money and Banking	Spring 1943- 1944
	8	Money and Banking	Summer 1944
	9	Money and Banking	Fall 1944-1945
	10	Money and Banking	Spring 1944- 1945
	11	Money and Banking	Summer 1945
	12	Money and Banking	Fall 1945-1946
	13	Money and Banking	Spring 1945- 1946
	14	Money and Banking	Fall 1946-1947
	15	Money and Banking	Spring 1946- 1947
	16	Money, Credit and Prices	1929-1930
	17	Money, Credit and Prices	1930-1931
	18	Money, Credit and Prices	1931-1932
	19	Money, Credit and Prices	1932-1933
	20	Money, Credit and Prices	1933-1934
	21	Money, Credit and Prices	1934-1935