Contributing Institution: The Huntington Library

Title: Thomas Hastie Bell correspondence

Creator: Bell, T. H. (Thomas H.), 1867-1942

Identifier/Call Number: mssHM 37562-37616, 41995-42118, 42277-42350

Physical Description: 4.68 Linear Feet (4 boxes) 255 items

Date (inclusive): 1901-1942

Abstract: A collection of correspondence related to the life and work of American author Thomas Hastie Bell; also includes a small amount of manuscripts, documents, and ephemera.

Language of Material: Materials are in English.

Conditions Governing Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item]. Thomas Hastie Bell correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Six separate acquisitions all purchased from Miss Marion Bell (1972-1976): Frank Harris material, October 1972; Upton Sinclair material, December 1972; Elmer Gertz material, April 1973; Thomas Hastie Bell material, June 1975; Leonard Abbott material, August 1975; Thomas Hastie Bell material, February 1976.

Custodial History

Materials in this collection were separated into three collections (Thomas Hastie Bell papers, Upton Sinclair correspondence, and Frank Harris correspondence) by Huntington staff during 1973-1976. Sometime after 1976, all six acquisitions were interfiled chronologically into three boxes (255 items total); however, the catalog records for this material were never combined to reflect their arrangement in a single collection.

Biographical / Historical

Thomas Hastie Bell (1867-1942) was an American author who was associated with a number of important literary and political figures during his lifetime. He was an anarchist by political conviction, having come to that position through socialist thought which for Bell did not adequately provide for the maintenance of personal liberties. Bell denounced the Bolsheviks from the beginning of the Russian Revolution for their suppression of personal freedom and their doctrinaire approach to politics. Bell served as secretary to the publisher and editor Frank Harris for about seven years early in the 20th century and, during that time, he came to know many of the important literary figures of the day. Bell's books include: Edward Carpenter, the English Tolstoi (1932), and Oscar Wilde Without Whitewash. His book on Oscar Wilde was never published in English but was published in Buenos Aires with the title Oscar Wilde: Sus Amigos, Sus Adversaries, Sus Ideas (1946).

Scope and Contents

The collection contains correspondence written by Bell and his friends and colleagues; it is predominantly concerned with both political issues (especially anarchism) and Bell's literary work. The letters are arranged alphabetically by correspondent name with incoming and outgoing correspondence kept together. There are a small number of original autograph letters by Bell but the majority are carbon copies, author's retained copies, photocopies, and contemporary copies. Correspondents include, among others, Leonard Dalton Abbott, Roger Baldwin, Ekaterina Konstantinovna Breschko-Breshkovskaja, Lord Alfred Douglas, Elmer Gertz, Frank Harris, Pyyns Hopkins, Joan London, Nellie O'Hara, Upton Sinclair, and George Sylvester Viereck. The collection also contains a small number of manuscripts, documents, and ephemera; the manuscripts, mostly by Bell, concern both political and literary matters and focus on Oscar Wilde and Frank Harris.

Processing Information

Processed by Huntington Library Staff, 1973-1976; in 2020, Gayle Richardson created the finding aid.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent's name.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Anarchists -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Authors, American -- 20th century
Communism -- Soviet Union -- History -- 20th century
Communism -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Labor movement -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Labor unions -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Parapsychology -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Socialism -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Socialists -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Spain -- History -- Civil War, 1936-1939
United States -- Politics and Government -- 20th century
Ephemera -- United States -- 20th century
Documents -- United States -- 20th century
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 20th century
Manuscripts -- United States -- 20th century
Berkman, Alexander, 1870-1936
Harris, Frank, 1856-1931
Rocker, Rudolf, 1873-1958
Sexauer, Hermann Frederick, 1883-1971
Trotsky, Leon, 1879-1940
Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900
Abbott, Leonard Dalton, 1878-1953
Abelson, Sidney J.
Baldwin, Roger N. (Roger Nash), 1884-1981
Blackwell, Alice Stone, 1857-1950
Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Ekaterina Konstantinovna, 1844-1934
Bronson, Oliver Hart, 1870-1950
Davray, Henry D., 1873-
Douglas, Alfred Bruce, 1870-1945
Gertz, Bernice R.
Gertz, Elmer, 1906-2000
Hopkins, Prynne, 1885-
Kimmelman, Bessie
Lloyd, J. Wm. (John William), 1857-1940
London, Joan
McDougall, William, 1871-1938
Mencken, H. L. (Henry Lewis), 1880-1956
O'Hara, Nellie
Parry, Albert, 1901-1992
Sinclair, Upton, 1878-1968
Tobin, A. I.

Box 1, Folder 1-22
Leonard Dalton Abbott 1924 January-1936 December
Scope and Contents
Also includes letter to Bessie Kimmelman and letter from Sidney J. Abelson.

Box 1, Folder 23-24
Eugene Achiardi 1905 May-June
Scope and Contents
Outgoing letters only.
Box 1, Folder 25-27
Roger Baldwin 1931 January
Scope and Contents
Photocopy.

Box 1, Folder 28-32
Thomas Hastie Bell documents and writings 1905-1934
Scope and Contents
Includes the following: "Catherine Breshkovsky: a biographical essay;" "Frank Harris: exposé of Harris' villainy;" "Plagiarism by Frank Harris and others: an essay;" "Acknowledgement of funds in discharge of claims on Cesari Reserve Syndicate, Ltd.;" "Document granting power of attorney to Thomas H. Bell's wife Lizzie Turner."

Box 1, Folder 33
Alice Stone Blackwell 1929 June 19
Scope and Contents
Photocopy.

Box 1, Folder 34-35
Ekaterina Konstantinovna Breshko-Breshkovskaià 1929 February-March
Scope and Contents
Includes printed photograph and newspaper article.

Box 1, Folder 36
Henry-D. Davray 1935 January 6
Scope and Contents
Outgoing letter only.

Box 1, Folder 37
Alfred Bruce Douglas 1931 May 15
Scope and Contents
Outgoing letter only.

Box 1, Folder 38
"A Friend" 1941 December
Scope and Contents
Incoming letter only.

Box 1, Folder 39-40
Bernice R. Gertz 1934 January
Scope and Contents

Box 1, Folder 41-61, Box 2, Folder 1-59
Elmer Gertz 1929 January-1935 October
Scope and Contents
Includes contemporary copies of two letters from Alfred Bruce Douglas to Elmer Gertz.

Box 2, Folder 60
John Harrely 1904 December 31
Scope and Contents

Box 3, Folder 1-13
Frank Harris 1901 February-approximately 1920
Scope and Contents

Box 3, Folder 14-40
Pryns Hopkins 1922 April-1941 December
Scope and Contents
Letters are signed "Prince," "Prynce," and "Pryns;" includes a letter from Oliver Hart Bronson to Pryns Hopkins.

Box 3, Folder 41
John William Lloyd 1932 February 27
Scope and Contents
"Tom Bell:" 36 line poem to be read at a testimonial dinner.

Box 3, Folder 42-43
Joan London 1937 September-1940 February
Scope and Contents

Box 3, Folder 44
William McDougall 1929 June 26
Scope and Contents
Addressed to Upton Sinclair.
Box 3, Folder 45-66  
**Nellie O'Hara 1902 August-1905 June**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Letters are signed "Nellie Harris."

Box 3, Folder 67  
**Albert Parry 1931 February 1**

Box 4, Folder 1-61  
**Upton Sinclair 1923 May-1942 January**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Includes letters to The American Mercury, Bessie Kimmelman, and Henry Louis Mencken; also includes a letter addressed to Upton Sinclair and Pryns Hopkins.

Box 4, Folder 62  
**A. I. Tobin 1930, May 28**

Box 4, Folder 63-64  
**George Sylvester Viereck 1933 January-1936 March**

Box 4, Folder 65-67  
**Ephemera 1901-1942**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Includes: addressed and stamped envelopes and printed material.