

Collection: Edward T. Bell**Accession Number:** 2012.084

Finding Aid

Date Range: 1837-1947**Bulk Date:** 1880-1904 & 1929-1947**Creator:** St. Bonaventure Convent Community**Containers:** 2 legal size flip-top box (2 oversized photos)**Size (in cubic ft):** 2 ft³**Storage Location:** PCHS Library and Archives**Aid Created By:** Collette Annillo, intern (completed November 23, 2012)

Biographical Information:

Edward T. Bell was the president of the First National Bank in Paterson NJ. He was born, March 1843, to Dr. Edward Sullivan and Catherine Louisa (Beach) Bell, an old New Jersey family. Edward T. Bell attended Collegiate Institute in Newton NJ. He started working at the First National Bank in 1864 as a cashier until 1875; however he always retained his position on the board of directors. In 1882 he was elected Vice President of the board. When John J. Brown passed away in 1894, Mr. Bell succeeded him as President of the First National Bank. Edward T. Bell and John J. Brown created the Paterson Savings Institute which was formally opened May 1, 1869. In addition to serving as Vice President, Bell was also chairman of the finance committee.

He held many other prominent positions in Paterson; he was Vice President of the Paterson and Passaic Gas and Electric Company, Treasurer of the Passaic Water Company and Director in many other companies. He participated in the erection of the Church of the Redeemer, he was an original Park commissioner, a City Hall commissioner, a member and chairman of the Centennial committee who was instrumental in the erection of the "Centennial" Memorial.

Mr. Bell married Anna D. Anderson in June 1870. He died at the First National suddenly on November 23, 1908. The cause of death is believed to be a stroke of apoplexy.

Scope Note and Content:

This collection contains personal documents of Edward T. Bell, his father Edward S. Bell and his brother Thornton Beach Bell. There are also letters to and from Garret Hobart. There are numerous photographs of Thornton Beach Bell, Edward T. Bell's brother, and his wife Bettine LeFreve. The collection also includes miscellaneous postcards and other documents, which are assumed to have belonged to a member of the Bell family.

The collection holds four diaries written by Thornton Beach Bell's wife, Bettine LeFreve Bell Garrish. Bettine married Thornton and upon his death married Herbert Garrish. Her dairies are mainly about everyday life, her outings, lists of items she bought, the weather, etc. However, she has a travel diary as well in which she records her numerous trips to Spain and the Mediterranean. It seems as if she travelled there once with Thornton and once again, during the beginning of World War II, the mid. 1930s, with her second husband Herbert Garrish. In another diary she records her feelings after Thornton has passed and Mr. Garrish is courting her in the months following Thornton's death.

Series:

This collection was donated by St. Bonaventure Convent Community; they organized the collection into folders by person. Documents relating to Edward T. Bell were in one folder, documents relating to Edward S. Bell were in another folder and so on. These existing folders were transplanted into new folders with some reorganization being done to the photographs of Thornton Beach Bell and Bettine LeFreve.