

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Bennett Pell fonds (RBSC-ARC-1801)

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Bennett Pell fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	Bennett Pell fonds
ID:	RBSC-ARC-1801
Date:	1871-1912 (date of creation)
Physical description:	1 album (36 photographs : b&w ; 25 x 18 cm or smaller) 1 cm of textual records
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Description created by Claire Williams in December 2018.
Note [sourcesDescription]:	Records in the fonds.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Bennett Pell was a worker for early telegraph companies. He oversaw the installation of telephone lines in Europe and Asia, and is credited with the invention of the Brockie-Pell arc lamp.

Pell was born in 1842 in Faversham, Kent, to James and Selnia Pell. He was trained as a telegraph clerk with the Submarine Telegraph Company in London, where he began working in 1857. Pell joined the United Kingdom Telegraph Company in 1860 and was appointed to be in charge of the Birmingham Station. In 1863 Pell became involved with the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and in 1874 he became manager of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company in Singapore. He established the first telephone exchange in Singapore and in 1874 returned to England. Working with Messrs. Johns and Phillips, Pell created the Brockie-Pell arc lamp, which he formed his own company to acquire the rights to. He retired in 1898, and passed away in Exmouth on the 20th of September 1912. Bennett Pell married Mary Pell in 1872, and together they had 5 children, Frederick Bennett Pell, William Pell, Edith Pell, Gertrude Pell, and Amy Pell.

Scope and content

The fonds consists of a copy of Pell's last will and testament, as well as one album containing photographs, prints, and crests collected by Pell documenting his travels in the 1870s. Many of the photographs are labelled by location, and place names include Aden, Alexandria, Batavia, Isle of Wight, Cairo, Hong Kong, Java, Marseilles, Naples, Rangoon, Singapore, and Suez. Also included in the

collection is a page of crests of nobility, and two print portraits, one of Christine Nilsson and the other of Adelina Patti.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on contents of fonds.

Physical condition

Album binding has deteriorated, individual leaves should be handled with care.

Immediate source of acquisition

Records were donated by Wendy Harlock, great-granddaughter of Bennett Pell in 2018.

Restrictions on access

No access restrictions have been applied.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
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Access points

- United Kingdom Telegraph Company (subject)
 - Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (subject)
 - Multiple media (documentary form)
 - Asia (place)
 - United Kingdom (place)
 - Egypt (place)
-

Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1801-01-01	File - [Copy of last will and testament]	1912		
RBSC-ARC-1801-01-02	File - [Photograph album]	1871-1879		