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Alexander E. Cance Papers

1911-1958

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Professor and Head of the Agricultural Economics Department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst when it was known as Massachusetts Agricultural College who also worked briefly for Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Herbert Hoover, as well as the United States Department of Agriculture. Includes biographical materials, correspondence concerning Cance's role in the agricultural cooperative movement, addresses, articles (both in typescript and published), lectures, book reviews, typescript of a Carnegie study of factors in agricultural economics, a summary of a U.S. Senate report of which he was co-author, "Agricultural Cooperation and Rural Credit in Europe," and research material. No documentation of his role as a delegate to the Hoover Conference on Economic Crisis, 1920, or his position as Supervisor of Market Research with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1922.

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Agricultural education

Mass Agricultural College (1863-1931)

Mass State College (1931-1947)

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Background on Alexander E. Cance

Alexander E. Cance, Professor and Head of the Agricultural Economics Department at the University of Massachusetts, was born in 1874 in Wisconsin. In 1891 he graduated from the academy of Gale College, Galesville, Wisconsin, and taught physics, mathematics, and science through the next year (1892). From there he went to Macalester College of St. Paul, Minnesota, where he received his B.A. in 1896. For the next three years (1896-1899) he taught Mathematics, Greek, Latin, and English Literature at Avalon College, Missouri. In 1900 he taught Mathematics at Diploma Teachers College, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Cance then spent three years teaching on the high school level, first at Ganesville, Wisconsin (1901), then as Principal of the Industrial and Farm School, Asheville, North Carolina (1902-1904). Cance then returned to Wisconsin, where he earned the M.A. in Psychology and Education (1906) and his Ph.D. in Economics (1908) from the University of Wisconsin.

In the fall of 1909 Cance came to the Massachusetts Agricultural College and initiated his work in Agricultural Cooperation. By 1910 he had organized the first course in "Cooperation in Agriculture" to be offered in the United States. In 1912 he was made the Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, a post he retained until 1935.

Dr. Cance also served in a variety of roles outside the University. In 1913 he was appointed to President Woodrow Wilson's Committee of Seven to Study Cooperation and Credit in Europe. While serving on this committee he visited cooperative leaders in fourteen countries and assisted in the editing of the four volumes published by the U.S. Senate in 1914. In 1916 the Bureau of the Census selected Cance to make a field study and report on Agriculture in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Directly after the end of World War I, Cance served with the Army Education Corps as Head of the Department of Economics at the University of Beaune, France (1919). Here he taught courses in Agricultural Economics to American servicemen stationed in France. Upon his return to the United States in 1920 he was selected as a delegate to the Hoover Conference on the Economic Crisis, where he served as a member of the Committee for the Agricultural Report. In 1922 he was made Supervisor of Market Research for the United States Department of Agriculture in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. This was to be Cance's last extended absence from the Massachusetts Agricultural College; he dedicated the rest of his career to expanding the college.

Dr. Cance retired in June 1942 from Massachusetts State College (formerly the Massachusetts Agricultural College). He was honored with a D.Sc. by his Alma Mater, Macalester College, in June 1948. The Institute of Cooperation honored him at its 1948 session in Amherst for his lifetime service to the cooperative movement.

Scope of collection

The papers document Alexander Cance's distinguished career as professor and Head of the Agricultural Economics Department at the Massachusetts Agricultural College. They include biographical material, a small amount of correspondence (largely professional), addresses, typescripts of articles, an annotated typescript of his book *Agricultural Marketing* (1916), publications, book reviews, lectures, press notices, research material, lectures and articles by others on agricultural cooperation and economics, and newsclippings.

Well-documented and representing the bulk of the collection are Cance's writings. They include a substantial number of addresses (1925-1934; n.d.), articles both in typescript (1912-1926; n.d.) and published (1911-1925), lectures (n.d.), book reviews (1912-1932), and the Carnegie Study of Factors in Agricultural Economics (1914).

Other materials include: a Senate Report of the American Commission Investigating Cooperative Agriculture in Europe, entitled "Agricultural Cooperation and Rural Credit in Europe" (1914); a small amount of correspondence concerning Cance's role in the agricultural cooperative movement; and some miscellaneous research material.

Largely absent from this collection, with the exception of a few of his lectures, are materials related to his role as a teacher. In addition, these papers include no documentation of Cance's activities as a delegate to the Hoover Conference on Economic Crisis (1920), or his position as Supervisor of Market Research with the United States Department of Agriculture (1922).

Arrangement

This collection is organized into two series:

Series 1. Writings, 1910-1948, n.d.

Series 2. Research Files, 1909-1949

Inventory

Series 1. Writings

1910-1948, n.d.

Biographical materials

n.d.

Box 1: 1

Memoirs of an Irresponsible Executive

n.d.

Box 1: 2

Correspondence

1945-1948

Box 1: 3

Addresses

1911-1934

Box 1: 4-9

Articles

1911-1928

Box 1: 10-11

Articles-Typescripts

1910-1919

Box 1: 12-13

Articles-Typescripts

1920-1933

Box 2: 14

Book reviews

1912-1932

Box 2: 15

Book typescripts

1916, n.d.

Box 2: 16-17

Carnegie Study report

1914

Box 2: 18

Course Lectures

n.d.

Box 2: 19

Course Outlines

1917-1931

Box 2: 20

Press notices

n.d.

Box 2: 21

Writings-Typescripts

n.d.

Box 2: 22-24

Series 2. Research Files

1909-1949

Agricultural Economics-Research

1925

Box 3: 1

Agricultural Production

1909-1934

Box 3: 2-3

Agricultural Production Costs

1916

Box 3: 4

Agricultural Subsidies

1917

Box 3: 5

Agricultural Survey- Belchertown
1912
Box 3: 6
Agricultural-Massachusetts
1913-1925
Box 3: 7
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1932
Box 3: 8
Banks and Agriculture
1916
Box 3: 9
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1914-1949
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Capper-Volstead Act
1922
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1917-1929
Box 3: 13
Consumers' Societies
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Box 4: 27
Farm Labor
1912-1916

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Farm Labor Cooperatives
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Farmers' Cooperative Exchanges
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Land Banks
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Land Depreciation
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Land Tenure
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Land Utilization
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Livestock Planning
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Manufacturing Investment
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Massachusetts Dairymen's Assoc.
1932
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Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Assoc.
1920-1923
Box 5: 46
New England Agricultural Survey
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Box 5: 47
New England Dairies
1926-1932
Box 5: 48
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1928
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New England Milk Producers' Assoc.

1916-1922
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Polish Corporation Store
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YMCA War Work
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Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired prior to 1972.

Processing Information

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Language:

English

Acknowledgments

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Copyright and Use (More information)

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Search terms

Subjects

Agricultural economics--Massachusetts.

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University of Massachusetts Amherst. Department of Agricultural Economics.

Contributors

Cance, Alexander E. [main entry]

Link to similar SCUA collections

Agricultural education

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