

August 9, 1955

Internal Memorandum

Papers of Arthur Ballantine

Miss Shaw, Mr. Ballantine's secretary, is a stout fussy woman who has been with Mr. Ballantine more than thirty years and knows what is in his papers better than he does. She had been through his files and had culled a few items of interest to the Committee, including all the speeches made while he was Assistant or Under Secretary of the Treasury, correspondence with Eccles about a speech in which Mr. Ballantine mentioned Eccles, correspondence with President Roosevelt about delaying Mr. Ballantine's resignation when the Democrats came in in 1933, and a copy of the original memorandum presented to Mr. Roosevelt by Mr. Woodin, Mr. Davison, and Mr. Ballantine on March 7, 1933, on the subject of reopening the banks. This last memorandum is annotated in Mr. Ballantine's writing and in what Miss Shaw thinks is Mr. Roosevelt's hand. She is having a photostat made of it for this Committee.

Miss Shaw was interested in the Committee's efforts to see that collections of papers, such as those of Mr. Ballantine, are deposited where they can be used by historians. She was distressed to hear of the loss of Mr. Kent's papers and will, I think, jealously guard Mr. Ballantine's papers. She urged upon me several pieces of material which I did not accept, saying that we would prefer to have Mr. Ballantine's papers remain intact until placed as a unit at the disposal of scholars. Mr. Ballantine, according to his devoted secretary, does not really know what he has in his files and does not show any particular interest in his papers, except for a few special letters and memoranda, such as letters from Secretaries Woodin and Mills

thanking him for his services to the Treasury, and the memorandum on the reopening of banks in 1933, mentioned above.

Mr. Ballantine was Solicitor-General of the United States when the first Internal Revenue Code was drafted. At least this is what Miss Shaw says though I may have misunderstood her. At any rate, he was responsible for drafting the first income tax forms and there is material in his files on this subject.

I saw three file cabinets in Mr. Ballantine's office and Miss Shaw indicated that one of them was almost full of papers relating to his public services. In addition he has a set of day-by-day memoranda written during the banking crisis of 1933. This set, whose volume I do not know, is at his apartment.

Miss Shaw did not react favorably to my suggestion that Miss Adams call on Mr. Ballantine this summer at Oyster Bay, Long Island. She has promised to call me in September when Mr. Ballantine returns to the city. I suggested that Miss Adams write him then, asking for an appointment, and this suggestion did meet with approval.

I told Miss Shaw about Dr. Chandler's book, saying that Mr. Ballantine might have memories of Mr. Strong. I also told her of the projected financial library center at Columbia. She was most interested in both these ideas, vis-a-vis Mr. Ballantine, but will not discuss them with him. She is devoted to her employer.

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Mr. Ballantine was asked by the Oral History people at Columbia to discuss the Banking Crisis of 1933. He refused, possibly because he did not feel sufficiently vigorous for the effort, also I sensed because he did not wish to talk so much about it.