

1056-H1-1323      **V. Frederick Rickey\*** ([fred-rickey@usma.edu](mailto:fred-rickey@usma.edu)), Department of Mathematical Sciences, United States Military Academy, West Point, West Point, NY 10996. *Eric Temple Bell's Men of Mathematics: From Influential to Infamous.*

Eric Temple Bell (1883–1960) was a gifted mathematician who received the Bôcher Prize in analysis in 1924, served as President of the MAA, 1931-33, and wrote some 250 research papers, 13 books, 13 novels, and a book of poetry. But he is best known for his *Men of Mathematics* (1937), a book which has never gone out of print. We will judge this book by the standards of his times: did he use his historical sources wisely and were there sources he should have used? Today this book is still known to build students' interest in learning mathematics but also for its prejudices, exaggerations, and fanciful tales. But how was it received when it appeared? There is no doubt that this book has been tremendously influential, prodding many to careers in mathematics. But is it still worthwhile to put in the hands of young students? We will discuss some of the controversies that surround Bell and his book. (Received September 21, 2009)