John Bell Rae Papers

Finding aid prepared by Sara Chetney, MA
Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library
800 North Dartmouth Ave
Claremont 91711
Email: spcoll@cuc.claremont.edu
URL: http://libraries.claremont.edu/sc/default.html
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Descriptive Summary
Title: John Bell Rae papers
Dates: 1936-1988 and undated
Collection number: H.Mss.0703
Creator: Rae, John Bell
Extent: 5 Linear Feet (5 records boxes)
Repository: Claremont Colleges Library. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library. Claremont, CA 91711
Abstract: This collection contains the papers of John Bell Rae, a historian of industry and technology and one of the first members of the Harvey Mudd faculty. Besides teaching at both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvey Mudd College, Rae authored seminal texts on the history of industry and performed research for engineering projects and committees such as the NASA Historical Advisory Committee and Harvard University’s Research Center for Entrepreneurial History. This collection contains Rae's biographical information, personal correspondence, and notes. It also contains Rae's various academic papers, including articles, theses, research notes, and lectures on engineering history and policy. Please consult repository.

Language of Material: Languages represented in the collection: English.
Access
Collection open for research.
Publication Rights
All requests for permission to reproduce or to publish must be submitted in writing to Special Collections.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], John Bell Rae Papers (H.Mss.0703). Special Collections, The Claremont Colleges Library, Claremont, California.

Provenance / Source of Acquisition
Gift of Mrs. Florence Rae, 1989.

Accruals
No additions to the collection are anticipated.

Processing Information
Collection was minimally processed. Files were rehoused into archival folders and boxes. Metal clasps and fasteners were removed and replaced with plastic. Original order was maintained.

Biographical / Historical
John Bell Rae (1911 – 1988) was a historian and professor whose lifelong fascination with industry and technology, and its impact on human development, shaped his career. Besides teaching at both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvey Mudd College, Rae authored seminal texts on the history of industry and performed research for engineering projects and committees such as the NASA Historical Advisory Committee, Harvard University’s Research Center for Entrepreneurial History, and had his research into the American automotive industry sponsored by the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association. He was also a founder and past president of the Society for the History of Technology. In 1980, he was the recipient of its highest award, the Leonardo da Vinci Medal.

Rae was born in Glasgow, Scotland and emigrated with his family to the United States when he was twelve years old. He earned his B.A. in history from Brown University and briefly studied at Yale before returning to Brown for graduate study on the history of economics. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees under the supervision of James B. Hedges, and wrote a highly regarded dissertation on railroad land grants. Beginning his teaching career at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rae would leave the institution in 1959 in order to become a full time faculty member at the newly founded Harvey Mudd College. There, he taught classes on the history of technology and industry. He strongly believed that engineers should also have a liberal arts education, and served as chairman of the Liberal Studies Division of the American Society for Engineering Education in both 1962-63 and 1968-69.

Retiring in 1976, John Bell Rae continued to teach at Claremont Graduate School, research, and write. He remained active until his unexpected passing in 1988. Rae is remembered for his prolific career, dedication, and passion for his work.

Sources

Scope and Contents
This collection contains the personal papers of John Bell Rae. Materials in this collection include biographical information, personal correspondence, and notes. It also contains Rae's various academic papers, including articles, theses, research notes, and lectures on engineering history and policy.

**Organization and Arrangement**
Collection is arranged at the folder level. Original order of the materials was maintained.

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog.

**Subject Terms**
- Engineers
- Engineering--History
- Harvey Mudd College
- History
- History of Technology
- Technology--History
- Universities and colleges -- Faculty

**Genre and Form of Materials**
- Articles
- Correspondence
- Lectures
- Research notes and studies

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<th>Box 1, Folder 1</th>
<th>Biographical and personal items 1958-1966</th>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 2</td>
<td>Biographical and personal items 1971-1988</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 3</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 6</td>
<td>University Club of Claremont</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 7</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
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Note
In regards to scholarships and aid, and debate over admission of women.

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<th>Box 1, Folder 8</th>
<th>Pictures of a Packard speedster and Mercedes Benz 540-K</th>
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<th>Experimental Determination of the Velocity of Light, facsimile of notebook</th>
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<td>Textron annual report 1976</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 12</td>
<td>Oxford Trip</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 13</td>
<td>Microfilm and Address cards</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 14</td>
<td>Slides, mostly of automobiles</td>
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<td>Rae’s Thesis: ‘The Development of Railway Land Subsidy Policy in the United States’ 1936 May</td>
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<td>Box 2, Folder 2</td>
<td>Lowell: An Early American Industrial Community 1950</td>
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<td>Box 2, Folder 3</td>
<td>Lowell: An Early American Industrial Community, copy, MIT 1950</td>
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<td>Typescripts: &quot;The Engineer as Businessman&quot; 1954</td>
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<td>Box 2, Folder 5</td>
<td>Article by Rae: &quot;The Fabulous Billy Durant&quot; 1958</td>
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<td>Box 2, Folder 6</td>
<td>26 reprints of &quot;The Rationalization of Production&quot; by John Rae 1967</td>
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<td>Included are: &quot;American Engineers: Diversity of Skills, Unity of Purpose&quot;; &quot;Engineers Are People&quot;; and &quot;Coleman du Pont and His Road&quot; offprint from Delaware History, Vol. XVI. No. 3 (1975).</td>
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<td>Engineer in History - Chapter 2, revised</td>
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| Box 2, Folder 17 | Engineer in History - Chapter 5 |
|                | Note |
|                | Including Chapter 5 notes in folder marked "2:17a." |

| Box 2, Folder 18 | Engineer in History - Chapter 6 |
| Box 2, Folder 19 | Engineer in History - Chapter 7 complete |
|                | Note |
|                | Including Chapter 7 notes marked 2:19a. |

<p>| Box 2, Folder 20 | Engineer in History - Chapter 8 Volti Draft |
| Box 2, Folder 21 | Engineer in History - notes and miscellaneous |
| Box 3, Folder 1  | Publisher's paste-ups for the textbook &quot;The World Since 1945&quot; |
| Box 3, Folder 2  | Articles and research materials |
| Box 3, Folder 3  | Book on auto industry - Twayne Press |
| Box 3, Folder 4  | Auto industry - tables |
| Box 3, Folder 5  | White motors |
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| Box 3, Folder 16 | EM-H Foundation |
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| Box 3, Folder 18 | Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - correspondence |</p>
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<td>Economic and social effects of the motor vehicle - correspondence, guidelines, summaries, etc.</td>
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Box 5, Folder 4  XVth International Congress of the History of Science, Edinburgh 1977 August
Box 5, Folder 5  Red portfolio from the XVth International Congress of the History of Science
Box 5, Folder 7  Transparencies: History of Engineering
Box 5, Folder 8  Lecture notes on a steno pad
                Note
                Notes from a conference.
Box 5, Folder 9  Apollo 14 launch information, nametag, also aeronautic certificate
Box 5, Folder 10 California Electric Utilities and Industry - Position statement, approvals of technology and summary of record 1977
Box 5, Folder 11  Manuscript - chapters 1 through 4
Box 5, Folder 12  Manuscript - chapters 5 through 8
Box 5, Folder 13  Manuscript - chapters 9 through 12 and notes on sources
Box 5, Folder 14  Printed manuscript with edits
Box 5, Folder 15  American Automobile Manufacturers