

---

## 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](mailto:spcoll@cuc.claremont.edu)

URL: <http://libraries.claremont.edu/sc/default.html>

© 2018

Claremont University Consortium. All rights reserved.

---

## **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**

Flink, James J. "John Bell Rae (1911-1988)." *Technology and Culture* 30, no. 3 (1989): 718-22.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3106002>.

### **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

---

Box 1, Folder 1	<b>Biographical and personal items 1958-1966</b>
Box 1, Folder 2	<b>Biographical and personal items 1971-1988</b>
Box 1, Folder 3	<b>Miscellaneous</b>
Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Academic Documents</b>
Box 1, Folder 5	<b>Humanities 2</b>
Box 1, Folder 6	<b>University Club of Claremont</b>
Box 1, Folder 7	<b>Correspondence</b>
	<b>Note</b>
	In regards to scholarships and aid, and debate over admission of women.
Box 1, Folder 8	<b>Pictures of a Packard speedster and Mercedes Benz 540-K</b>
	<b>Note</b>
	Sent to Rae by "La Forge," UCLA.
Box 1, Folder 9	<b>Experimental Determination of the Velocity of Light, facsimile of notebook</b>
Box 1, Folder 10	<b>Textron annual report 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 11	<b>Glasgow Herald, 20th Anniversary color supplement, includes facsimile of the Glasgow Advertiser no. 1 1783 January 27</b>
Box 1, Folder 12	<b>Oxford Trip</b>
Box 1, Folder 13	<b>Microfilm and Address cards</b>
Box 1, Folder 14	<b>Slides, mostly of automobiles</b>
Box 1, Item 1	<b>Brown dowel</b>
Box 2, Folder 1	<b>Rae's Thesis: 'The Development of Railway Land Subsidy Policy in the United States' 1936 May</b>
Box 2, Folder 2	<b>Lowell: An Early American Industrial Community 1950</b>
Box 2, Folder 3	<b>Lowell: An Early American Industrial Community, copy, MIT 1950</b>
Box 2, Folder 4	<b>Typescripts: "The Engineer as Businessman" 1954</b>
Box 2, Folder 5	<b>Article by Rae: "The Fabulous Billy Durant" 1958</b>

---

Box 2, Folder 6	<p><b>26 reprints of "The Rationalization of Production" by John Rae 1967</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>From Technology in Western Civilization, Vol. II, c. 1967.</p>
Box 2, Folder 7	<p><b>Reprints of "The Internal Combustion Engine on Wheels," by John Rae 1967-1968</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>From Technology in Western Civilization Vol. II, c. 1967. Also abstract for "The Introduction of the Modern Airplane," 1968.</p>
Box 2, Folder 8	<p><b>Addresses and articles by Rae 1975</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>Included are: "American Engineers: Diversity of Skills, Unity of Purpose"; "Engineers Are People"; and "Coleman du Pont and His Road" offprint from Delaware History, Vol. XVI. No. 3 (1975).</p>
Box 2, Folder 9	<p><b>Articles by Rae 1962-1980</b></p> <p><b>"The Agricultural Sciences in the U.S. 1860-1920"</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Correspondence</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Ribbon Copy</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Introduction and Chapter 1</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 2, revised</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 3, revised edition</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>Including corrected copy as sent to Twayne, marked "folder 2:15a."</p>
Box 2, Folder 10	
Box 2, Folder 11	
Box 2, Folder 12	
Box 2, Folder 13	
Box 2, Folder 14	
Box 2, Folder 15	<p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 4, revised</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 5</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>Including Chapter 5 notes in folder marked "2:17a."</p>
Box 2, Folder 16	<p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 6</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 7 complete</b></p> <p><b>Note</b></p> <p>Including Chapter 7 notes marked 2:19a.</p>
Box 2, Folder 17	
Box 2, Folder 18	<p><b>Engineer in History - Chapter 8 Volti Draft</b></p> <p><b>Engineer in History - notes and miscellaneous</b></p> <p><b>Publisher's paste-ups for the textbook "The World Since 1945"</b></p> <p><b>Articles and research materials</b></p> <p><b>Book on auto industry - Twayne Press</b></p> <p><b>Auto industry - tables</b></p> <p><b>White motors</b></p> <p><b>Auto industry - Martin</b></p> <p><b>Auto industry - current</b></p> <p><b>U.S. auto data</b></p> <p><b>Auto industry</b></p> <p><b>Japanese auto industry</b></p> <p><b>World auto industry</b></p> <p><b>Auto industry miscellaneous</b></p> <p><b>Albatrosses</b></p> <p><b>American society of traffic and transportation</b></p> <p><b>Barker, Theodore</b></p> <p><b>EM-H Foundation</b></p> <p><b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography</b></p> <p><b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - correspondence</b></p>
Box 2, Folder 19	
Box 2, Folder 20	
Box 2, Folder 21	
Box 3, Folder 1	
Box 3, Folder 2	
Box 3, Folder 3	
Box 3, Folder 4	
Box 3, Folder 5	
Box 3, Folder 6	
Box 3, Folder 7	
Box 3, Folder 8	
Box 3, Folder 9	
Box 3, Folder 10	
Box 3, Folder 11	
Box 3, Folder 12	
Box 3, Folder 13	
Box 3, Folder 14	
Box 3, Folder 15	
Box 3, Folder 16	
Box 3, Folder 17	
Box 3, Folder 18	

---

---

Box 3, Folder 19	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Henry Ford II</b>
Box 3, Folder 20	<b>Newspaper articles on the death of Henry Ford II</b>
Box 3, Folder 21	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography Electric Vehicle Company</b>
	<b>Note</b>
	Includes Henry Martyn Leland.
Box 3, Folder 22	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Hiram Percy Maxim</b>
Box 3, Folder 23	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Albert A. Pope</b>
Box 3, Folder 24	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Alfred Sloan</b>
Box 3, Folder 25	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Pope Manufacturing Company</b>
Box 3, Folder 26	<b>Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography - Management</b>
Box 3, Folder 27	<b>Arete (Academic American Encyclopedia)</b>
Box 3, Folder 28	<b>Encyclopedia Britannica</b>
Box 3, Folder 29	<b>International Encyclopedia</b>
Box 3, Folder 30	<b>Ferris State College, Michigan</b>
Box 3, Folder 31	<b>Gladstone, Francis "Kings of the Road" - WGBH</b>
Box 3, Folder 32	<b>Griffin, Patrick</b>
Box 3, Folder 33	<b>History - engineering</b>
Box 3, Folder 34	<b>Highway history</b>
Box 3, Folder 35	<b>Imports</b>
Box 3, Folder 36	<b>Jet Propulsion Laboratory</b>
Box 3, Folder 37	<b>National Geographic</b>
Box 3, Folder 38	<b>Correspondence and papers Approximately 1969-1973</b>
Box 4, Folder 1	<b>McGraw-Hill book company</b>
Box 4, Folder 2	<b>Nissan - contract</b>
Box 4, Folder 3	<b>Nissan - finance</b>
Box 4, Folder 4	<b>Nissan, including Nissan Chapter 1</b>
Box 4, Folder 5	<b>Nissan - articles of incorporation</b>
Box 4, Folder 6	<b>Nissan - organization chart</b>
Box 4, Folder 7	<b>Nissan tables</b>
Box 4, Folder 8	<b>Japan Travel Record</b>
	<b>Note</b>
	Including "Japan Trip" in folder marked 4:8a.
Box 4, Folder 9	<b>Shimokawa, Koichi, Professor</b>
Box 4, Folder 10	<b>Notes and photographs</b>
Box 4, Folder 11	<b>Presidential address</b>
Box 4, Folder 12	<b>Professionalism for engineers</b>
Box 4, Folder 13	<b>Public research, syndicated</b>
Box 4, Folder 14	<b>Rennie</b>
Box 4, Folder 15	<b>Robinson, Walter</b>
Box 4, Folder 16	<b>Santa Barbara Commencement</b>
Box 4, Folder 17	<b>Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.</b>
Box 4, Folder 18	<b>Swasey, Ambrose</b>
Box 4, Folder 19	<b>Tricker's Shoemakers</b>
Box 4, Folder 20	<b>United Way</b>
Box 4, Folder 21	<b>University of Nevada</b>
Box 4, Folder 22	<b>University of Wyoming - American Heritage Center</b>
Box 4, Folder 23	<b>"The Automobile Age" by James J. Flink, Part I of II</b>
Box 4, Folder 24	<b>"The Automobile Age" by James J. Flink, Part II of II</b>
Box 4, Folder 25	<b>Dorr, Thomas Wilson</b>
Box 4, Folder 26	<b>Typescript: Life of Thomas Dorr</b>
Box 5, Folder 1	<b>International Congress of Historical Sciences, Stuttgart 1985</b>
Box 5, Folder 2	<b>International Congress of Historical Sciences, Stuttgart - correspondence 1985</b>
Box 5, Folder 3	<b>Economic and social effects of the motor vehicle - correspondence, guidelines, summaries, etc.</b>

---

---

Box 5, Folder 4  
Box 5, Folder 5  
Box 5, Folder 6

**XVth International Congress of the History of Science, Edinburgh 1977 August  
Red portfolio from the XVth International Congress of the History of Science  
"Hearing: State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission in the  
Matter of: Implementation of Nuclear Reprocessing and Waste Disposal Legislation"  
1977 June 16**

Box 5, Folder 7  
Box 5, Folder 8

**Transparencies: History of Engineering  
Lecture notes on a steno pad**

**Note**

Notes from a conference.

Box 5, Folder 9  
Box 5, Folder 10

**Apollo 14 launch information, nametag, also aeronautic certificate  
California Electric Utilities and Industry - Position statement, approvals of technology  
and summary of record 1977**

Box 5, Folder 11  
Box 5, Folder 12  
Box 5, Folder 13  
Box 5, Folder 14  
Box 5, Folder 15

**Manuscript - chapters 1 through 4  
Manuscript - chapters 5 through 8  
Manuscript - chapters 9 through 12 and notes on sources  
Printed manuscript with edits  
American Automobile Manufacturers**