

R. Hoe and Company Records4078901

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor Columbia University, Mail Code 1127 535 W. 114th St. New York, NY 10027 Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-5153
Fax Number: (212) 854-1365
rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html

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Summary Information

Repository: Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Creator: R. Hoe & Company

Source: Saxe, Stephen O.

Source: American Printing History Association

Title: R. Hoe and Company Records

ID: 4078901

ID: MS#0599

Date [inclusive]: 1824-1953

Physical 20 linear

Description:

20 linear feet 45 boxes and 1 map case drawer

Language of the

Material:

English .

Abstract: This collection contains records of the American printing

machine manufacturing company R. Hoe and Company, in operation from circa 1805 until 1969. The records were salvaged from the vacant offices of the R. Hoe and Company factory in the Bronx, New York, shortly before its demolition.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); R. Hoe and Company Records; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

Historical note

R. Hoe and Company, which operated from circa 1805 until 1969, was an American firm of printing machine manufacturers located in the Bronx, New York, whose rotary press became important in the field of newspaper printing. Richard March Hoe (1812-1886) took over the firm in 1833 and was especially interested in experimental and manufacturing phases of the business.

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Biographical / Historical

The R. Hoe Company was, for 164 years, one of the country's leading manufacturers of printing presses and similar equipment, and in the nineteenth century in particular there was scarcely any innovation in the printing processes that did not originate from, or at least stand considerable improvement by, the company. In 1969, however, financial troubles forced the plant to close, and some of its business records were rescued in a last-minute raid before the building was demolished.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1805 Robert Hoe, a recent emigrant from Leistershire, England, formed a partnership with his brothers-in-law Peter and Matthew Smith to manufacture printing presses under the name Smith, Hoe & Co. At that point, very little progress or improvement in the printing processes had been made since Gutenberg's time. Hoe and the Smiths, however, set to work, and through a combination of their own mechanical ingenuity and their talent for recognizing marketable ideas of others, they developed a number of important improvements. A patent purchased from Samuel Rust was the basis of the Washington Hand Press, a landmark press that utilized a more efficient toggle-joint instead of a platen screw, which was first produced in 1827. In 1832 the company (by now renamed, after the death of both Smith brothers, R. Hoe and Co.) produced the first cylinder press in America, a marked improvement over the European model by Napier.

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Biographical / Historical

Richard March Hoe, Robert's son, assumed the presidency of the company on his father's death in 1833, and under his leadership a number of significant changes in the newspaper press were made. There appeared in 1846 the Type Revolving Machine, a forerunner of the modern rotary press, and in 1871 the first web press; but perhaps the flashiest accomplishments of the company were its continual increases in the size of its presses. In 1887 the first quadruple press was marketed, capable of printing 48,000 eight-page papers in one hour. Four years later, Hoe

produced a sextuple press that could print 72,000 papers in an hour. Four years after that, the octuple press was developed, which printed sixty-four pages in a single manoeuvre. In 1901 the imaginatively-named double sextuple press was perfected. And in 1907, the company dazzled the industry with a double octuple press.

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Biographical / Historical

By the early years of the twentieth century, however, the era of great accomplishments seemed to be waning. The second Robert Hoe, nephew of Richard March and a prominent figure in the elite world of the great book collectors, died in 1909, and from then on the company seemed important more for its large size than its innovativeness. It continued to manufacture presses throughout the twentieth century until 1969, when to the great surprise of most observers, the firm was sued by two stockholders on the grounds that it had issued false financial reports. In July the firm filed for bankruptcy, claiming that its "failure to land new orders in significant volume had left it unable to meet current obligations" and citing its closing market average at 13 ¾ a share, as compared to the year's high of 57 ¾. In June of 1970 the newspaper and press division was bought by Hood Industries of New Jersey. The plant in the Bronx stood empty for several years before it was demolished.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains records of the American printing machine manufacturing company R. Hoe and Company, which was in operation from circa 1805 until 1969. The records were salvaged from the vacant offices of the R. Hoe and Company factory in the Bronx, New York, shortly before its demolition. As such, there are many gaps.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in five series. Selected materials cataloged; remainder listed and arranged.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor Columbia University, Mail Code 1127 535 W. 114th St. New York, NY 10027 Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365 rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html

Revision Description

PDF finding aid converted to EAD and collection title changed by CLB. 2020-05-19

Restrictions on Access

Boxes 20-45 are located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--18911P. Method of acquisition--Purchase; Date of acquisition--1965. Accession number--M-65.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of American Printing History Association, 1977.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Yale University Library, 1979.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Susan O. Thompson, 1982.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983.

Ownership and Custodial History

Just before the wrecking balls were due to swirl, Roger Campbell, curator of the Bowne and Co. printing museum at the South Street Seaport, and Stephen O. Saxe, a trustee of the American Printing History Association, learned of the plans. They "hurried uptown and were allowed to look through the cavernous old building for historic material. The heat [had] already been turned off and the building was cold and bleak. At first they found little, outside of some company correspondence dating back to the early years of the twentieth century. They were almost ready to give up when the caretaker offered to open the company vault for them. It was there they found treasures that made them forget they were tired and cold and hungry. There were boxes of photographs, with many showing installations of Hoe presses in various locations around the country. There were two original portraits of Richard and Robert Hoe, circa 1887. That day they carried away as much as they could manage...What other things were lost they hate to contemplate. The junk dealers had been there before them" (American Printing History Association Letter No. 14 [November-December 1976], pp. 1-2). The items had been piled into a weak-springed station wagon and driven from 138th Street in the Bronx down to South Street, where they were heaped in the little "office" in the back of the second floor of the Bowne and Co. museum.

Processing Information

Cataloged Christina Hilton Fenn 07/--/89.

Processing Information

Materials were intellectually arranged into series and subseries at the same time the finding aid was converted to EAD. Nothing in the collection was physically rearranged.

Processing Information

The archivist who originally processed portions of the collection in 1977, Andrea Tucher, arranged the contract files in Boxes 37 and 38 in chronological order. She then created a geographical index for locating materials from each company which had ordered Hoe printing presses between 1894 and 1919. Tucher also wrote the collection's historical note and custodial history.

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Processing Information

This collection was formerly called the Richard M. Hoe and Company Records. Its title was changed in May 2020 to reflect the fact that, while Richard March Hoe was perhaps the company's most notable owner, it was never named after him.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

R. Hoe & Company records, 1831-1948 (bulk 1855-1870): a collection of Hoe family letters and business records. At the Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

Related Materials

R. Hoe & Company records, 1858-1878: primarily composed of incoming letters from customers for the company's extensive line of printing presses and associated equipment. It derives from a series of three or more letter books for 1858, 1873 and 1877-1878. At the Newberry Library, Chicago.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Lithographic workshops
- Printing presses -- Patents
- Newspaper presses

- Printing machinery industry
- Sawmills
- Printing plants
- Bookbinding industry
- Patents
- Scrapbooks
- Photographic prints
- Saxe, Stephen O.
- Tucker, Stephen D. (Stephen Davis), 1818-1902
- Hoe, Richard March, 1812-1886
- American Printing History Association

Collection Inventory

Series I: Cataloged correspondence and documents

Scope and Contents

Series I contains cataloged correspondence and other cataloged materials. Cataloged correspondence consists of a small group of letters sent to Richard March Hoe, who was head of R. Hoe and Company from 1833 until his death in 1886. The other cataloged documents include two unidentified printed items, a photograph of Laura Hoe, and two company history manuscripts by Stephen D. Tucker.

Title/Description	Instances
Bryant, William Cullen	box 1
Craig, Daniel H.	box 1
Crane, Thomas G.	box 1
Dodd, Moses Woodruff	box 1
Felley, S.R.	box 1
Franklin, William Buel	box 1
Harper, Joseph W.	box 1
Harper, J. Henry	box 1
Hoe, Rachel	box 1
Hoe, Theodora	box 1
Hurd, Mrs. F. M.	box 1
Johnstone, James	box 1
Lossing, Benson J.	box 1
Reed, Thomas C.	box 1

Reid, Whitelaw	box 1	
Tiffany, H.D.	box 1	
Van Benthuysen, Charles	box 1	
Van Vechten, A.M.	box 1	
Vyse, Thomas A.	box 1	

Subseries I.2: Cataloged documents

le/Description	Instances
Two printed items	box 1
Photograph of Miss Laura Hoe	box 1
History of R. Hoe and Company by Stephen D. Tucker <u>Physical Description</u> : 1 Volumes	box 1

R. Hoe and Company's Progress, 1884-1888 by Stephen D. box 1 Tucker

Physical Description: 1 Volumes

Series II: Incoming letters and accounts, 1833-1901

Scope and Contents

The bulk of the collection is in Series II. This series is composed of incoming letter files, many with name indexes, dating from 1837 to 1879 and 1901. The collection also contains many of the firm's letterpress books dating from between 1833 and 1878. These are composed of letters, accounts, and estimates for printing offices, newspaper offices, job presses, binderies, type foundries, saw mills, lithography shops, and stereotype foundries in the United States, Canada, Latin America, and Europe.

Subseries II.1: Incoming letter files, 1837, 1851-1901

Title/Description	Instances
1837 February 17-19	box 2
1837 October	box 2
1851 January	box 2
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1851 February	box 2
1853 June	box 2

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Scope and Contents

Includes index.

1853 July	box 2
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1853 August	box 2
1853 October	box 2
1854 January	box 3
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
Index, 1855	box 3
1855 March 1-7	box 3
1855 March 8-15	box 3
1855 March 16-22	box 3
1855 March 23-31	box 3
1855 April	box 3
1856 May	box 3
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1856 May 1-6	box 3
1856 May 7-13	box 3
1856 May 14-20	box 3
1856 May 21-27	box 3
1856 October	box 3
1857 September	box 3
1857 October	box 3
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1857 October 1-8	box 3
1857 October 9-15	box 3
1857 October 16-23	box 3

1857 October 24-31	box 3
1857 November	box 3
1858 January	box 4
Index, 1858 February	box 4
1858 February 1-5	box 4
1858 February 6-10	box 4
1858 February 11-15	box 4
1858 February 16-20	box 4
1858 February 21-25	box 4
1858 March	box 4
1858 April	box 5
1858 April 1-5	box 5
1858 April 6-10	box 5
1858 April 11-15	box 5
1858 April 16-20	box 5
1858 April 21-25	box 5
1858 April 26-28	box 5
1858 April 29-30	box 5
1858 May	box 5
Index, 1858 June	box 5
1858 June 1-5	box 5
1858 June 6-10	box 5
1858 June 11-15	box 5
1858 June 16-20	box 5
1858 June 21-25	box 5
1858 June 26-30	box 5
1858 July	box 5
1862 June	box 5
Physical Description: (bound)	
1862 June 1-30	box 6
Physical Description: (bound)	
1862 August	box 6

Scope and Contents

Includes index.

1862 August 1-6	box 6
1862 August 7-13	box 6
1862 August 14-20	box 6
1862 August 21-30	box 6
1863 January 1-31	box 6
<u>Physical Description</u> : (bound)	
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1863 January 1-31	box 7
Physical Description: (bound)	
1864 December	box 7
Index, 1865 January	box 7
1865 January 1-4	box 7
1865 January 5-8	box 7
1865 January 9-12	box 7
1865 January 13-16	box 7
1865 January 17-20	box 7
1865 January 21-24	box 7
1865 January 25-28	box 7
1865 January 29-31	box 7
1865 February	box 7
1868 May 28-31	box 7
1872 January	box 8
1872 February	box 8
1872 March	box 8
1872 July	box 8
1872 August	box 8
1872 September	box 8
1872 October	box 8

1872 November 1	box 8
1872 November 2-3	box 8
1872 November 4	box 8
1872 November 6	box 8
1872 November 7	box 8
1872 November 8	box 8
1872 November 9	box 8
1872 November 10	box 8
1872 November 11	box 8
1872 November 12	box 8
1872 November 13	box 8
1872 November 14	box 8
1872 November 15	box 8
1872 November 16	box 9
1872 November 17	box 9
1872 November 18	box 9
1872 November 19	box 9
1872 November 20	box 9
1872 November 21	box 9
1872 November 22	box 9
1872 November 23	box 9
1872 November 24	box 9
1872 November 25	box 9
1872 November 26	box 9
1872 November 27	box 9
1872 November 28	box 9
1872 November 29	box 9
1872 November 30	box 9
1873 February 3	box 10
1873 August 9	box 10
1874 January	box 10
Index, 1874 February	box 10

1874 February 1	box 10
1874 February 2	box 10
1874 February 3	box 10
1874 February 4	box 10
1874 February 5	box 10
1874 February 6	box 10
1874 February 7	box 10
1874 February 8	box 10
1874 February 9	box 10
1874 February 10	box 10
1874 February 11	box 10
1874 February 12	box 10
1874 February 13	box 10
1874 February 14	box 10
1874 February 15	box 10
1874 February 16	box 11
1874 February 17	box 11
1874 February 18	box 11
1874 February 19	box 11
1874 February 20	box 11
1874 February 21	box 11
1874 February 22	box 11
1874 February 23	box 11
1874 February 24	box 11
1874 February 25	box 11
1874 February 26	box 11
1874 February 27	box 11
1874 February 28	box 11
1874 March	box 11
Index, 1874 March 26-June 1	box 11
1874 April	box 11
1874 June	box 11

1874 May 1-10	box 11
1874 May 11	box 11
1874 May 12-15	box 11
1874 May 16-17	box 11
1874 May 18	box 11
1874 May 19	box 11
1874 May 20-25	box 12
1874 May 26 - 31	box 12
Index, 1874 September 26-October 26	box 12
1874 September 17-26	box 12
1874 October 1	box 12
1874 October 2	box 12
1874 October 3-4	box 12
1874 October 5	box 12
1874 October 6	box 12
1874 October 7-8	box 12
1874 October 9	box 12
1874 October 10-17	box 12
1874 October 24-30	box 12
1875 February 1	box 13
1875 March 9	box 13
1875 April 6-30	box 13
1875 June 10	box 13
Index, 1875 May 1-22	box 13
1875 May 1	box 13
1875 May 3	box 13
1875 May 4	box 13
1875 May 5	box 13
1875 May 6	box 13
1875 May 7	box 13
1875 May 8	box 13
1875 May 9-10	box 13

1875 May 11	box 13
1875 May 12	box 13
1875 May 13	box 13
1875 May 14	box 13
1875 May 15	box 13
1875 May 16-19	box 13
1875 May 20-22	box 13
Index, 1875 May 18-31	box 13
1875 May 1-19	box 13
1875 May 20-31	box 13
Physical Description: 2 folders	
1875 June 10	box 13
1875 July	box 13
1875 October	box 13
1876 October	box 14
1876 November	box 14
Index, 1877 January 27-March 19	box 14
1877 January 27	box 14
1877 February 10-19	box 14
1877 February 21	box 14
1877 February 22-25	box 14
1877 February 26	box 14
1877 February 27	box 14
1877 February 28	box 14
1877 March 1	box 14
1877 March 2	box 14
1877 March 3	box 14
1877 March 4-5	box 14
1877 March 6	box 14
1877 March 7	box 14
1877 March 8	box 14
1877 March 9-10	box 14

1877 March 11-19	box 14
1877 June 19, 26	box 14
1877 July 1-31	box 15
Index, 1877 July 31-August 20	box 15
1877 August 1-11	box 15
Physical Description: 2 folders	
1877 August 12-20	box 15
1877 August 30-December 19	box 15
1877 August 30	box 15
1877 October 1-31	box 15
Index, 1877 November 1-15	box 15
1877 November 1-19	box 15
Physical Description: 3 folders	
1877 October 12-29	box 16
1877 November 15-30	box 16
<u>Physical Description</u> : 3 folders	
Scope and Contents	
Includes index.	
1877 November 13-16	box 16
1877 December 7-31	box 16
Index, 1877 December 31-1878 January 12	box 16
1878 January 1-14	box 16
Physical Description: 3 folders	
1877 November 14-30	box 17
1877 December 1-9	box 17
1877 December 10-19	box 17
1878 February 25	box 17
1878 May 27	box 17
1878 June 1-30	box 17
1878 June 1-30 Index, 1878 July 12-22	box 17 box 17
Index, 1878 July 12-22	box 17

Physic	al Descr	iption: 2	2 folders
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1878 January 2	box 18
1878 March 26-29	box 18
1878 April 5-9	box 18
1878 April 12-20	box 18
Index, 1878 April 27-May 9	box 18
1878 May 1-9	box 18
1878 June 1-17	box 18
1878 July 9-17	box 18
1878 July 22-31	box 18
Index, 1878 August 5-19	box 18
1878 August 1-10	box 18
1878 August 11 - 19	box 18
1879 January-March	box 18
1879 February	box 18
B1901 June-November	box 19
C1901 June-November	box 19
D1901 June-November	box 19
G1901 June-November	box 19
H1901 June-November	box 19
I-J, 1901 June-November	box 19
K1901 June-November	box 19
L-M, 1901 June-November	box 19
N-P, 1901 June-November	box 19
S1901 June-November	box 19
T1901 June-November	box 19
undated	box 19
Physical Description: 1 folders	

Subseries II.2: Letterpress books, 1833-1889		
Title/Description	Instances	
1833 March 18-1834 February 10	box 20	
1834 September-1835 April 15	box 20	

Letter-press book, 1834-1858	box 36
1837 March 27-November 6	box 20
1839 December 11-1841 February 15	box 20
1842 December 15-1846 April 15	box 21
1850 February 25-September 19	box 21
1859 January 25-May 9	box 22
1859 May 3-August 3	box 23
1859 August 4-November 9	box 23
1862 February 3-July 9	box 24
Steel order book, 1862 April 15-1869 April 7	box 27
1863 May 9-September 30	box 24
1865 May 21-Sept 29	box 25
1866 January 19-March 21	box 25
1866 December 10-1867 January 24	box 25
1868 June-August	box 26
1868 December 20-1869 March 6	box 26
1868 March 6-April 12	box 27
1870 March 15-April 29	box 27
1870 June 2-August 5	box 28
1873 April 8-May 31	box 29
1873 October 21-December 12	box 30
1874 May 20-July 1	box 30
1874 July 1-August	box 31
1874 November 24-1875 January 5	box 31
1876 January 18-March	box 32
1876 May 2-July 10	box 32
1876 October 5- November 26	box 33
1876 November 21-1877 January 23	box 33
1877 March 12-April 27	box 34
1878 April 8-May 20	box 35
Chicago office: orders sent, 1887 December 28-1889 April 13	box 35

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Series III: Contract files, 1894-1912

Other Finding Aids

See <u>Summary Guide to the R. Hoe Orders and Contracts File, 1911</u> (p. 10 of PDF), for a list of individual firms ordering materials from R. Hoe and company in 1911.

Scope and Contents

Series III contains a small group of contract files with related correspondence dating from 1894 and 1910-1912, but chiefly for the year 1911.

Title/Description	Instances
1894 January-1911 July	box 37
1911 August-January 1912	box 38

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Series IV: Patents, 1824-1908, 1949-1953

Scope and Contents

Series IV contains some miscellaneous patents dating from 1949 to 1953. There are also miscellaneous manuscript patent files for printing presses, with diagrams and blueprints, as follows: American patents, circa 1850-1900, French patents, 1824-1906, and German patents, 1893-1908.

Title/Description	Instances	
1949 November 8	box 39	
1950 February 14	box 39	
1950 April 4	box 39	
1950 May 2	box 39	
1950 May 23	box 39	
1950 August 8	box 39	
1950 August 15	box 39	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Susan O. Thompson, 1982		
1952 December 9	box 39	
1952 December 16	box 39	
1952 December 23	box 39	

1952 December 30	box 39	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Susan O. Thompson, 1982		
1953 January 6	box 39	
1953 February 3	box 39	
1953 March 10	box 39	
1953 March 17	box 39	
1953 April 7	box 39	
1953 May 26	box 39	
1953 June 9	box 39	
1953 June 16	box 39	
American patents, A-Hoe, circa 1850-1900	box 40	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983		
American patents, L-W, circa 1850-1900	box 41	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983		
French patents, 1824-1894, undated	box 42	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983		
French patents, 1898-1906	box 43	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983		
German patents, 1893-1908	box 43	
Immediate Source of Acquisition		
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983		

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Series V: Scrapbooks and photographs

Scope and Contents

Series V contains a small subject file of technical data for printing, binding, and other Hoe equipment. It also includes scrapbooks with photographs of Hoe machinery and ten oversize photographs of Hoe presses, 1872-1950. The photograph of Laura Hoe was cataloged and is in Subseries I.2: Cataloged documents.

Title/Description	Instances
Manuscript register of printing equipment used by newspapers with titles N-Z, undated	box 39
Scrapbooks of Photographs of Hoe Equipment, undated	box 44
Immediate Source of Acquisition	
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983	
Subject File of Technical Data, B-W, undated	box 45
Immediate Source of Acquisition	
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983	
Photographs of Hoe presses, 1872-1950	mapcase 14-
Physical Description: 10 items	M-7
Immediate Source of Acquisition	
Gift of Emilia Kazimiroff, 1983	

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