

J. Robert Van Pelt Copper Range Company Research Collection MS-028

Finding aid prepared by Daniel Michelson



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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections
2013
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Summary Information

Repository	Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections
Creator	Van Pelt, J. Robert, (John Robert), 1896-1991
Title	J. Robert Van Pelt Copper Range Company Research Collection
Date [inclusive]	1840s-1977
Extent	5.78 cubic feet 17 manuscript boxes (letter size)
Language	English
Language of Material	English
Mixed materials [Box]	1-17
Abstract	<p>Dr. John Robert ("Bob") Van Pelt was Michigan Tech's sixth president, serving the campus from 1956 to 1965. After he stepped down, Van Pelt began work on a history of the Copper Range Company (whose board he had joined in 1961). The manuscript was unfinished when the Copper Range Company was acquired by Louisiana Land and Exploration in 1977. The collection contains files related to Van Pelt's incomplete manuscript about the history of the Copper Range Company. The bulk of the material consists of Van Pelt's research files. There are also interviews and correspondence with Copper Range Company personnel, as well as records of Van Pelt's service on the Copper Range Company Board of Directors.</p>

Preferred Citation

MS-028, J. Robert Van Pelt Copper Range Company Research Collection, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.

Biographical/Historical note

Dr. John Robert ("Bob") Van Pelt was Michigan Tech's sixth president, serving the campus from 1956 to 1965. After he stepped down, Van Pelt began work on a history of the Copper Range Company (whose board he had joined in 1961). The manuscript was unfinished when the Copper Range Company was acquired by Louisiana Land and Exploration in 1977.

Born 1896 in Denver, Van Pelt received his early college instruction at Cornell College, near Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In 1922, Van Pelt completed his Bachelor of Science and Engineer of Mines degrees at the Michigan College of Mines. After working in industry, Van Pelt began a career in education by returning to Cornell College as a professor in the Department of Geology. From 1928 to 1944, Van Pelt was the Technical Director at the Museum of Science & Industry in Chicago. He then became Director of the Research Education Division at the Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, Ohio, serving until his appointment as president of the Montana School of Mines in 1951.

Van Pelt returned to Houghton in October 1956 to become the sixth president of the Michigan College of Mining and Technology, succeeding Grover Dillman. During his presidency the College greatly increased in physical and student size and program diversity. Perhaps most significantly, the expansion encouraged the State of Michigan to improve the College's status in 1965, renaming the institution Michigan Technological University. Van Pelt resigned his presidency January 1, 1965, but remained on campus for another year as MTU's first chancellor. He continued to maintain close ties with the University after 1966 under the honorary title of President Emeritus.

In 1988, the University recognized his contributions to the campus by naming the library building in his honor. Dr. John Robert Van Pelt died May 3, 1991 in Sarasota at the age of 95.

Van Pelt and the Copper Range Company

The Copper Range Company (1899-1977) was a copper mining company that operated numerous mines, including the Baltic Mine, Champion Mine, Trimountain Mine, and White Pine Mine. It also controlled the Copper Range Railroad Company, Copper Range Motor Bus Company, and Michigan Smelting Company.

In 1961, Van Pelt was elected to the Copper Range Company's Board of Directors. He served in this role until reaching the mandatory retirement age in 1970, at which point he became director emeritus.

In mid-1965, Van Pelt initiated a Copper Range Company funded project to write a history of the company. Originally intended to be completed in October 1966, the project would remain unfinished when the Copper Range Company merged with Louisiana Land and Exploration in 1977.

Collection Scope and Content Summary

The collection contains files related to Van Pelt's incomplete manuscript about the history of the Copper Range Company. The bulk of the material consists of Van Pelt's research files. There are also interviews and correspondence with Copper Range Company personnel, as well as records of Van Pelt's service on the Copper Range Company Board of Directors.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into four series:

Series I: Manuscript Drafts, 1960s-1977

Series II: Research Files, 1840s-1977

Series III: Project Files, 1965-1977 Series III is arranged in two subseries: Subseries I: Correspondence and Interviews with Copper Range Company Personnel, 1965-1977 Subseries II: General Files, 1965-1977

Series IV: Director's Files, 1961-1976

Series II-IV are arranged alphabetically.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections 2013

Access

Available for use in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

Conditions Governing Use

Various copying restrictions apply. Guidelines are available from Michigan Technological University Archives & Copper Country Historical Collections.

Acquisition

The collection was donated to the Michigan Tech Archives by J. Robert Van Pelt in 1984 and Peter Van Pelt in 1991.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

MS-080, Copper Range Company Records

MTU-068, J. Robert Van Pelt Papers (MTU-068)

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Baltic Mining Company.
- C. G. Hussey & Company.
- Champion Copper Company.
- Copper District Power Company.
- Copper Range Company.
- Copper Range Consolidated Company.
- Copper Range Railroad Company.
- St. Mary's Canal Mineral Land Company.
- Trimountain Mining Company.
- White Pine Copper Company.

Genre(s)

- Clippings (Information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Manuscripts (Document genre)
- Research (Document genres)

Geographic Name(s)

- Globe Mine (Houghton County, Mich.)
- Painesdale (Mich.)
- White Pine Mine (Mich.)

Personal Name(s)

- Boyd, James, 1904-1987
- Paine, F. Ward, (Francis Ward), 1888-1940
- Paine, William A., (William Alfred), 1855-1929
- Reichek, Morton A.
- Schacht, William H., 1880-1944

Subject(s)

- Copper industry and trade--Michigan
- Copper Miners' Strike, Mich., 1913-1914
- Copper mines and mining--History--Michigan
- Copper mines and mining--Michigan--Keweenaw Peninsula
- Copper mines and mining--Michigan--Ontonagon County
- Copper mines and mining--Michigan--Painesdale
- Copper mines and mining--Michigan--Upper Peninsula
- Geology--Michigan

Series I: Manuscript Drafts

Collection Inventory

Series I: Manuscript Drafts 1960s-1977

Scope and Content Summary

This series consists of drafts of Van Pelt's manuscript in varying stages of completion.

	Box	Folder
Manuscript Management undated	1	1
Manuscript: Original Copy (folder no. 1) 1976-1977, undated	1	2
Manuscript: Original Copy (folder no. 2) 1977, undated	1	3
Manuscript: Correction Copy (folder no. 1) undated	1	4
Manuscript: Correction Copy (folder no. 2) undated	1	5
Manuscript: Insurance Copy (folder no. 1) undated	1	6
Manuscript: Insurance Copy (folder no. 2) undated	1	7
Various Drafts: Front Matter and Preface 1975, undated	2	1
Various Drafts: Chapter 1 undated	2	2

Series I: Manuscript Drafts

Various Drafts: Chapter 2 undated	2	3
Various Drafts: Chapter 3 undated	2	4
Various Drafts: Chapter 4 undated	2	5
Various Drafts: Part II undated	2	6
Various Drafts: Part III undated	2	7
Various Drafts: Appendix A undated	2	8
Various Drafts: Appendix B undated	2	9
Various Drafts: Appendix C undated	2	10
Various Drafts: Appendix E undated	2	11
Various Drafts: General undated	2	12
Original Draft of Part III by Morton A. Reichek 1969	3	1
Comments by John Bley, Harold Reichardt, and J. M. Haivala (White Pine Copper Company) 1969	3	2
Comments by Unknown Reviewer undated	3	3

Series II: Research Files

Series II: Research Files 1840s-1977**Scope and Content Summary**

Van Pelt's research files contain copies of historic documents from the Copper Range Company and its various subsidiaries, as well as newspaper clippings, articles, and notes. The material covers a broad range of mining related topics, such as labor, economics, and geology.

	Box	Folder
Board of Directors and Stockholders Meetings 1899-1965	3	4
Chronological File 1899-1937	3	5
Chronological File 1899-1969	3	6
Chronological File 1903-1936	3	7
Chronological File 1936-1945	4	1
Chronology 1904-1964	4	2
Community Relations 1910s-1970s	4	3
Copper Range Exploration Company 1965, undated	4	4
<i>Copper Range News</i> Notes 1961-1975	4	5
Copper Range Railroad Company (folder no. 1) 1890s-1970s	4	6

Series II: Research Files

Copper Range Railroad Company (folder no. 2) 1890s-1970s	4	7
Copper Range Railroad Company (folder no. 3) 1890s-1970s	4	8
Correspondence of Marginal Value 1900s-1950s	4	9
Correspondence of Marginal Value 1910s-1940s	5	1
Douglass Lands and Mohawk Mine 1920s-1960s	5	2
Economics: General (folder no. 1) 1890s-1970s	5	3
Economics: General (folder no. 2) 1890s-1970s	5	4
Economics: Price Controls (World War II) 1941-1966	5	5
Environment (folder no. 1) 1960s-1970s	5	6
Environment (folder no. 2) 1960s-1970s	6	1
General Copper History 1890s-1970s	6	2
General Copper Range Company History 1950s-1970s	6	3
Geology and Exploration 1950s-1970s	6	4
Health and Safety (folder no. 1) 1900s-1970s	6	5

Series II: Research Files

Health and Safety (folder no. 2) 1900s-1970s	6	6
Hussey: Chronological File 1931-1966	7	1
Hussey: Chronological File 1936-1965	7	2
Hussey: General (folder no. 1) 1840s-1970s	7	3
Hussey: General (folder no. 2) 1840s-1970s	7	4
Hussey: General (folder no. 3) 1840s-1970s	7	5
Hussey: Material not Pertinent 1960s	7	6
Hussey: New Bus Bar Plant 1964-1970s	7	7
Industrial Chronology undated	8	1
Labor: 1913-1914 Strike (folder no. 1) 1913-1970s	8	2
Labor: 1913-1914 Strike (folder no. 2) 1913-1970s	8	3
Labor: 1913-1914 Strike (folder no. 3) 1913-1970s	8	4
Labor: General (folder no. 1) 1900s-1970s	8	5
Labor: General (folder no. 2) 1900s-1970s	8	6

Series II: Research Files

Lands and Forests 1910s-1970s	8	7
The Long View: Amax Merger Plans 1968-1975	9	1
The Long View: General 1960s-1970s	9	2
Maps of the Upper Peninsula	9	3
Michigan Smelting Company 1910s-1970s	9	4
Mill and Mine Origin of Lake Superior Stamps Sands, Houghton and Keweenaw Counties (R-182 U. S. Bureau of Mines report) 1970	9	5
Milling 1912-1970s	9	6
Newspaper Clippings 1966-1967	9	7
Notebooks no. 1-2 undated	9	8
Notes 1968	9	9
Officers and Directors Listings undated	9	10
Personalities: General 1940s-1970s	9	11
Personalities: Hubbard, L. L. 1900s-1970s	9	12

Series II: Research Files

Personalities: Hussey, C. G. 1880s-1970s	9	13
Personalities: LaCroix, Morris F. 1950s-1970s	10	1
Personalities: Paine, F. Ward 1940-1970s	10	2
Personalities: Paine, William A. 1920s-1970s	10	3
Personalities: Schacht, William H. 1907-1970s	10	4
Power Companies (folder no. 1) 1900s-1940s	10	5
Power Companies (folder no. 2) 1900s-1940s	10	6
Prehistoric Miners 1960s-1970s	10	7
Research by Michigan State University at White Pine on Accelerated Plant Growth 1976	10	8
Research: General (folder no. 1) 1960s-1970s	10	9
Research: General (folder no. 2) 1960s-1970s	10	10
Research: Rock Mechanics 1960s-1970s	10	11
Sales Department 1970, undated	10	12

Series II: Research Files

Sarah Sargent Paine Memorial Library 1928-1960s	11	1
South Range Mines: Atlantic 1900s-1970s	11	2
South Range Mines: Baltic 1880s-1970s	11	3
South Range Mines: Champion 1890s-1970s	11	4
South Range Mines: General 1890s-1970s	11	5
South Range Mines: Globe 1900s-1970s	11	6
South Range Mines: Isle Royale 1930s-1970s	11	7
South Range Mines: Trimountain 1900s-1970s	11	8
South Range Mines: Trimountain (Burrage suit) 1900s-1970s	11	9
South Range Mines: Winona 1960s-1970s	11	10
St. Mary's: General (folder no. 1) 1853-1970s	12	1
St. Mary's: General (folder no. 2) 1853-1970s	12	2
St. Mary's: Merger with Copper Range Company 1927-1928	12	3
Statistics: General 1890s-1970s	12	4

Series II: Research Files

Statistics: Table I (Copper Production, World and U. S., 1845-1970) 1960s-1970s	12	5
Statistics: Table II (Copper Price) 1960s-1970s	12	6
Statistics: Table III (Copper Production, Michigan, 1845-1970) 1960s-1970s	12	7
Statistics: Table IV (Copper Production, Michigan, by Company) undated	12	8
Statistics: Table V (Copper Production, Copper Range Company, by Mine) undated	12	9
Statistics: Table VI (Hussey Production [Sales]) undated	12	10
Water Lines 1936, undated	12	11
White Pine Chronological File 1919-1950	12	12
White Pine Chronological File 1951-1952	12	13
White Pine Copper Company: Board Meetings undated	13	1
White Pine: Early Years 1911-1970s	13	2
White Pine: Financing Chronology undated	13	3
White Pine: General (folder no. 1) 1920s-1970s	13	4

Series III: Project Files

White Pine: General (folder no. 2) 1920s-1970s	13	5
White Pine: General (folder no. 3) 1920s-1970s	13	6
White Pine: General (folder no. 4) 1920s-1970s	13	7
White Pine: Geology 1950s-1970s	13	8

Series III: Project Files 1965-1977

Scope and Content Summary

The project files provide insight into Van Pelt's research and writing process, as well as his close relations with the Copper Range Company.

Subseries I: Correspondence and Interviews with Copper Range Company Personnel 1965-1977

Scope and Content Summary

Van Pelt's correspondence and interviews with current and former Copper Range Company personnel in this subseries is perhaps the most valuable part of the collection. The interviews in particular provide a view of the human side of the Copper Range Company's history. As an example, his interview with Ira Joralemon includes a lengthy and candid appraisal of key Copper Range Company officers from the 1930s to 1950s.

	Box	Folder
Ackroyd, J. Roland (Copper Range Company Secretary-Treasurer): Correspondence 1965-1970	14	1

Subseries I: Correspondence and Interviews with Copper Range Company Perso...

Arre, Jean (Copper Range Company Assistant Secretary): Correspondence 1972	14	2
Audiocassette Recordings of Conferences with J. Roland Ackroyd, Edward R. Bingham, Robert M. Neil, and William P. Nicholls 1969, 1971	17	9
Beaudin, P. F. (former Copper Range Company Treasurer): Correspondence 1966	14	3
Bingham, Edward R. (White Pine Copper Company Manager of Environmental and Quality Control): Correspondence and Interview 1971	14	4
Bley, John (White Pine Copper Company Vice-President): Correspondence 1973	14	5
Boyd, James (Copper Range Company President): Correspondence 1965-1971	14	6
Boyd, James (Copper Range Company President): General 1960s-1970s	14	7
Boyd, James (Copper Range Company President): Interviews 1965-1969	14	8
Boyd, James (Copper Range Company President): J. R. Van Pelt's Advice on Historical Speeches and Articles 1968-1969	14	9
Chabot, Larry (White Pine Copper Company Public Relations Assistant): Correspondence 1969	14	10

Subseries I: Correspondence and Interviews with Copper Range Company Perso...

Counselman, T. B. (former Copper Range Company Consultant): Correspondence 1969	14	11
Croft, Harry (Copper Range Company Vice-President): Correspondence and Interviews 1966-1969	14	12
Darling, Nelson J., Jr. (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence 1965-1971	14	13
Duncan, William M. (White Pine Copper Company Staff Geologist): Correspondence 1969	14	14
Ensign, Chester O. (Copper Range Company Chief Geologist): Interview 1965-1966	14	15
Ensign, Chester O. (Copper Range Company President): Correspondence 1966-1976	14	16
Finlay, Walter L. (Copper Range Company Vice-President): Correspondence 1969-1977	15	1
Foster, John M. (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence 1971	15	2
General Correspondence and Interviews 1966-1973	15	3
Gregorich, Florence E. (Copper Range Company Administrative Assistant): Correspondence 1968-1972	15	4

Subseries I: Correspondence and Interviews with Copper Range Company Perso...

Haivala, John M. (White Pine Copper Company Executive Vice-President): Correspondence 1969-1971	15	5
Hunter, Andrew D. (Hussey Division President): Correspondence 1965-1969	15	6
Joralemon, Ira (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence and Interview 1966	15	7
Kaefer, Charles H. (Hussey Division): Correspondence 1966	15	8
Lally, John P. (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence 1965	15	9
Lawrence Thomas P. (Copper Range Company Office Manager): Correspondence 1974	15	10
Lighthill, David P. (Copper Range Company Secretary-Treasurer): Correspondence 1971-1974	15	11
McGrath, George R. (White Pine Copper Company President): Correspondence 1965-1977	15	12
Mendelsohn, Albert (former Copper Range Company Superintendent): Correspondence 1968	15	13
Neil, Robert M. (White Pine Copper Company Assistant Director of Safety and Claims): Correspondence and Interview 1971	15	14

Subseries II: General Files

Nicholls, William P. (Copper Range Company Vice-President): Correspondence and Interviews 1965-1975	15	15
Paine, F. Ward (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence 1966-1975	15	16
Patrick, Joseph L. (White Pine Copper Company Manager of Engineering and Geological Services): Correspondence 1969	15	17
Rand, John R. (Copper Range Company Director): Correspondence 1974	15	18
Ruder & Finn (Copper Range Company Public Relations Firm): Correspondence 1966-1970	15	19
Todd, W. Parsons (former Copper Range Company Manager of Copper Sales): Correspondence and Interview 1966-1969	15	20
Subseries II: General Files 1965-1977		
Scope and Content Summary		
This subseries includes research correspondence, as well as material relating to the design and planned publication of the book.		
	Box	Folder
Book Cover and Jacket Design undated	15	21
Book Mockup undated	15	22

Subseries II: General Files

Book Promotion 1970s	15	23
Book Title undated	15	24
Clarke, Don H.: Correspondence 1969	15	25
Correspondence: Federal Agencies 1969-1974	15	26
Correspondence: General 1966-1975	15	27
Correspondence: Libraries and Archives 1966-1972	15	28
Correspondence: State Agencies 1965-1971	15	29
Designs for Appendixes 1960s-1970s	15	30
Environmental Protection Agency: Correspondence 1972-1973	15	31
Erickson, Wilfred: Correspondence 1972	15	32
Filing Plan undated	15	33
Financial Records 1965-1967	16	1
General 1960s-1970s	16	2
Gundlach, Elvira H.: Correspondence 1973-1975	16	3

Subseries II: General Files

Hoffman, Frances G.: Correspondence 1966	16	4
Hussey, C. Curtis: Correspondence 1965	16	5
Illustrations and Photographs: End Papers 1970, undated	16	6
Illustrations and Photographs: General undated	16	7
Illustrations and Photographs: John D. Van Pelt's Illustrations 1976	16	8
Illustrations and Photographs: Overviews 1960s-1970s	16	9
Illustrations and Photographs: South Range undated	16	10
Illustrations and Photographs: White Pine to Hussey Flow Diagram 1973	16	11
Loss of Early St. Mary's and Hussey Files 1972	16	12
McGraw-Hill: Agreement Jul 1969	16	13
McGraw-Hill: Correspondence 1969-1973	16	14
McGraw-Hill: General 1969, undated	16	15
Michigan Technological University: Correspondence 1965-1977	16	16
National Safety Council: Correspondence 1972	16	17

Series IV: Director's Files

Outlines and Overviews 1960s-1970s	16	18
Permissions to Quote 1969-1976	16	19
Potential Publishers 1965-1969	16	20
Potter, George C.: Correspondence 1972	16	21
Reichek, Morton A.: Correspondence 1969-1970	16	22
Seaman, Wyllys: Correspondence 1966	16	23
Style: General 1960s-1970s	16	24
Style Guide undated	16	25
Suffolk Warehouse Inventory 1965	16	26
Summary of Agreements between Michigan Technological University and Copper Range Company 1965-1977	16	27
Timetable and Assignment of Responsibility circa 1968	16	28
Series IV: Director's Files 1961-1976		
Scope and Content Summary		
This series consists of records of Van Pelt's service on the Copper Range Company Board of Directors.		

Series IV: Director's Files

	Box	Folder
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1961	17	1
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1962	17	2
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1963	17	3
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1964	17	4
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1965	17	5
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1966	17	6
Copper Range Company Board of Directors 1968-1976, undated	17	7
White Pine Copper Company: Correspondence regarding Labor Disputes 1962-1968	17	8