

Rootes Archive Centre Trust

Photograph Albums

Bob Allan

Rootes Archive Centre Trust. Contact e-Mail: Bob: spares@theimpclub.co.uk

April 9, 2012

Abstract

This document is available from the Rootes Archive Centre Web site at <http://tardis.dl.ac.uk/ARCC/Albums/albums/index.html>. A PDF format copy of this document can be obtained from <http://tardis.dl.ac.uk/ARCC/Albums/albums.pdf>. You probably won't want to print it as there are over 50 pages, but it is searchable with a suitable PDF reader.

© **Rootes Archive Centre 2012**. The Rootes Archive Centre does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage arising either directly or indirectly from the use of information contained in any of their reports or in any communication about their tests or investigations. Whilst we have tried to be as accurate as possible, some errors may have occurred in the cataloguing process or interpretation.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Book 1	1
3	Book 2	2
4	Ryton Shadow Factory	3
5	Book 4	8
6	Acknowledgements	10

1 Introduction

This is the list of original Rootes photographs held in the Archive Centre. They are contained in four bound albums.

2 Book 1

A second album from 1925 was probably issued to commemorate the opening of the new headquarters in Devonshire House. It is introduced as follows.

In 1895 the business of Rootes Ltd. occupied premises of a total floor space of 850 square feet. In 1925 the total floor space necessary to carry on the business amounts to over five acres. In 1895 the staff consisted of two, in 1925 nearly 500.

In the following pages will be found illustrations of our various Depots, and we think that we may rightly say that in every instance these are of the most up to date character, and are so spaced as to ensure the adequate operation of the territories we hold from various Manufacturers. Elsewhere in this Album, for instance, will be found a map showing our Clyno territory, comprising 14 counties and the County of London, with a total population of seventeen and a half million.

In order to successfully administer this territory, the Rootes organisation is split up into four administrative sections: London, Birmingham, Maidstone and Dorking. These four main depots consist of...

In addition to these main Depots, are the two service stations, the main station being that situated at Lodge Place, St. John's Wood, which is the finest services station in England, the other situated at Wrotham Heath, Kent.

There is also in addition a Retail Depot at Rochester, operating in the local area.

In addition to the above a large bay of Messrs The Austin Motor Company's Works at Birmingham, is utilised by Rootes Ltd. for the expeditious distribution of Austin Cars.

Illustrations of all these will be found in the following pages.

This index lists the page numbers in the Album.

1. New Devonshire House
2. London Showrooms - 141 New Bond Street
3. London Service Station - Lodge Place, St. John's Wood Road, NW8
4. Midland Headquarters - John Bright Street
5. Midland Showrooms - Temple Street
6. Maidstone Depot - Len Engineering Works, Maidstone
7. Stores Depot - Len Engineering Works
8. Kent Service Station - Wrotham Heath
9. Rochester Depot - The Motor House and Star Hill.
10. Dorking Depot - Dorking, Surrey
11. Rootes Ltd. Delivery Bay - at Messrs. The Austin Motor Co's Works, Birmingham
12. Records Department - Bond Street Headquarters
13. Clyno Home Distribution
14. A Remarkable Clyno Test
15. A corner of the Stores at the London Service Station

3 Book 2

This 1925 book continues from Book 1.

This index lists the page numbers in the Album.

1. The Rootes Ltd. Organisation
2. 141 New Bond Street, London W1
3. John Bright Street and Lower Temple Street, Birmingham
4. Dorking High Street, Surrey
5. Len Engineering Works, Maidstone
6. The Motor House, Rochester, Kent
7. London Service Works, Lodge Place
8. Wrotham Service Station, Kent

4 Ryton Shadow Factory

Coventry Rootes Securities Limited Ryton-on-Dunsmore No.2 Factory Aircraft Division. Designed Photographed and Produced in the Studios of the Rootes Group.

The Rootes Archive Centre has an album dated June 1945 with a remarkable collection of some 120 photographs from the Rootes Studio. The preface to this album reads as follows.

These records depict the growth of the second Aero Engine Shadow Factory which, in early 1939, Rootes Securities Limited, were commissioned by the Air Ministry to erect and equip for the production in quantity of Bristol Hercules Engines.

A site of approximately 60 acres was chosen, situated on the London and Oxford Road junction leading from Coventry. In June 1939 work commenced levelling the site, road and sewers laying, erecting steelwork with special gas, water and electricity mains, these being necessary to cater for this large factory.

Meanwhile, from temporary offices in wooden huts, staff and technicians organised equipment, machinery, materials and labour ready to commence production immediately the buildings were available.

Despite the Declaration of War in Sep'1939, bringing innumerable difficulties, the first units were completed and despatched early in 1940, after which, production steadily increased until the planned target of "one an hour" was achieved. Early in 1943, with the factory in full production, the war situation demanded that the output should be doubled.

This entailed considerable re-arrangement of existing plant, additional buildings, machine tools and labour, all of which, at that period, were in exceedingly short supply.

Mainly due to the wonderful team spirit which prevailed amongst our 6,000 employees, who worked long and arduous hours consistently, the target of "two an hour" was accomplished and exceeded, later, to accommodate the production of the latest type Bristol Hercules 100 Engine, further re-arrangements of the factory layout were necessary.

No effort was spared in the layout to ensure for all the most hygienic and modern working conditions; a Canteen catering for 6,000 meals a day -- the most up to date Surgery with fully qualified staff and Works Doctor always available to deal with any injury and look after the general health of the workers -- social activities, covering indoor and outdoor sports, with a large playing field adjacent to the factory grounds.

In Dec'1943, when ultimate Victory was assured, in common with most Ministry contracts, we were advised by MAP to reduce production gradually to a finality by 30/6/1945. As in the case of No.1 Factory, therefore, this factory will change over to the Industries of Peace as manufactured by the Rootes Group.

This index lists the page numbers in the Album.

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. Plan of Works
6. Site of Factory – May 1939
7. .
8. Model of Works
9. Aerial view of Site – June 1939
10. Site Entrance on London Road
11. Temporary Offices
12. Block “A” Steelwork Exterior
13. .
14. Block “A” Steelwork Interior
15. .
16. Boiler House Erection
17. Sub-terranean Reservoir Construction
18. Storm Water Drain Construction
19. Storm Water Drain Construction
20. Sewage Farm
21. Storm Water Effluent
22. View of Front Offices from N.E. Corner
23. General View of Offices from S.E. Corner

24. Aerial View of Works with Painted Camouflage
25. Aerial View of Works with Camouflage Netting
26. South Road Camouflage
27. Gas Producer Plant
28. View of Camouflaged Works from top of Office Block
29. Car Park Camouflage
30. First Machines in Block "A"
31. General View of Block "A", Dec'1940
32. Panoramic View of Block "A", Dec'1941 (in full production)
33. Panoramic View of Block "A", Dec'1941
34. Interior Views Block "AX"
35. .
36. First Hercules Components completed 27/11/1939
37. First Hercules Blower Units completed 16/7/1940
38. View of Heavy Section Front Covers and Crankshaft Rear
39. View of Heavy Section Crank Cases
40. Borematic Operation on Crank Case Assy
41. Ryder Automatics on Clutch Section
42. Tool Reclamation Dept
43. Tool Room
44. Heat Treatment Block "E" and Electric Salt Baths, Block "D"
45. General View, Block "D"
46. Radiant Heat, Enamelling Plant and Plating Shop
47. Polishing Shop
48. Physical Laboratory "AX" and Chemical Laboratory
49. Physical Laboratory in Block "A"
50. Final View
51. Standards Room
52. Blow Test Rigs and Rear Cover Rigs

53. Blower Test Rig
54. Bulkhead Assy
55. Engine Build
56. Crankshaft Assy with Bearings, Main Drive Shaft and Reduction Gears
57. Crankshaft Assy
58. Composite View
59. Crank Case and Sleeve Drive Assy
60. Blower Assy
61. Hercules VI Front View
62. Hercules VI Three-quarter View
63. Hercules VI with Exhaust Ring and Controllable Gills
64. Hercules "100" sectioned Engine
65. General View of Crane Bay, Quarantine and Bonded Stores
66. Power Plant Receiving Bay
67. General Stores
68. Grinding Wheel Stores
69. Test Rig Rectifiers
70. No.1 Sub-Station
71. Boiler House
72. Compressor House
73. Swarf Disposal
74. Garage
75. Foyer
76. Large Conference Room
77. Small Conference Room
78. Photostat Room
79. Drawing Office
80. Buying Office
81. Cost Accounts

82. Merchandised Accounts
83. Accounts Dept
84. Employment Office – Reception
85. Training Dept – Fitting instruction
86. Training Dept – Machine instruction
87. Security Police
88. Home Guard “D” Company, 14th, Coventry Battalion
89. Fire and Ambulance Station
90. Fire Tender and Ambulance
91. Roof Spotters
92. A.R.P. Control
93. Surgery Reception
94. One of the Surgeries
95. Blood Donors
96. Blood Donor
97. Health Week: Brains Trust
98. Warships Week: Rootes Exhibit
99. “Salute the Soldier” Week: Target Board
100. “Salute the Soldier” Week: American Concert Party
101. Canteen Exterior
102. Works Canteen
103. Main Bar
104. Games Room
105. Directors’ Dining Room
106. Executives’ Dining Room
107. Staff Canteen
108. Kitchens
109. General View: Dilke Farm Hostel
110. Dilke Farm Hostel

111. Rootes Group Mobile Cinema Show
112. Tea Trolley Service
113. Barber's Shop
114. Clean Overall Stores
115. Works Orchestra
116. Male Voice Choir
117. Production Supervision Dinner
118. Entertaining American Wounded Soldiers
119. Halifax with Hercules Engine over Rootes No.2

5 Book 4

An album of photographs in the Archive Centre from [1940s?]. The preface to this album reads as follows.

Accomplishment: From the sale of a single car in 1898 at Maidstone in Kent to an organisation handling some tens of thousands of cars annually with representatives in almost every country of the world - such is the achievement of Rootes Ltd, Devonshire House, London.

Their efforts today are concentrated on selling the products of Humber, Hillman and Commer - three Associated Companies - whose activities are wholly centred on building British Cars and Commercial Vehicles able to compete in every way throughout the world.

This index lists the page numbers in the Album.

1. Main Bar
2. Canteen Exterior
3. Works Canteen
4. Devonshire House - London Headquarters of the Rootes Group
5. The Accounts Department
6. Executive Offices looking towards Export Department
7. Part of the Export Department looking towards Mezzanine Floor Showrooms.

8. (General Office)
9. Ground Floor Showrooms
10. New Devonshire House, Piccadilly W1
11. Lower Showrooms
12. Devonshire House, Piccadilly W1 - Headquarters of the Organisation
13. Devonshire House Showrooms by Night.
14. The Main Waiting Room adjoining the Directors' Offices
15. General View of Engineering Drawing Offices, Humber Ltd., Stoke Factory
16. General View of Rootes Group Assembly Plant, Fishermens Bend [sic], Australia
17. Aerial View of Rootes Group Assembly Plant, Fishermens Bend [sic], Australia
18. Front View of Rootes Group Assembly Plant, Fishermens Bend [sic], Australia
19. Front View of Rootes Group Assembly Plant, Fishermens Bend [sic], Australia
20. .
21. Front View of Rootes Group Assembly Plant, Fishermens Bend [sic], Australia
22. General view of Stoke Factory, Humber Ltd. Coventry
23. Front Entrance of Stoke Factory, Humber Ltd. Coventry
24. Main Entrance to Rootes Ltd. London Service Station
25. (Hillman Service)
26. A view of the main drive and one of the Repair Shops - Rootes Ltd. London Service Station
27. The Headquarters of Rootes Argentina SA at Buenos Aires
28. General View of Rootes Ltd. Maidstone
29. (Ryton Aerial)
30. (Ryton from SE corner)
31. "Salute the Soldier Week" American Concert Party
32. Entrance to Thrupp and Maberly [sic] Ltd. Acton
33. .
34. .
35. .
36. .

6 Acknowledgements

We thank members of The Association of Rootes Car Clubs who have made this archive possible.