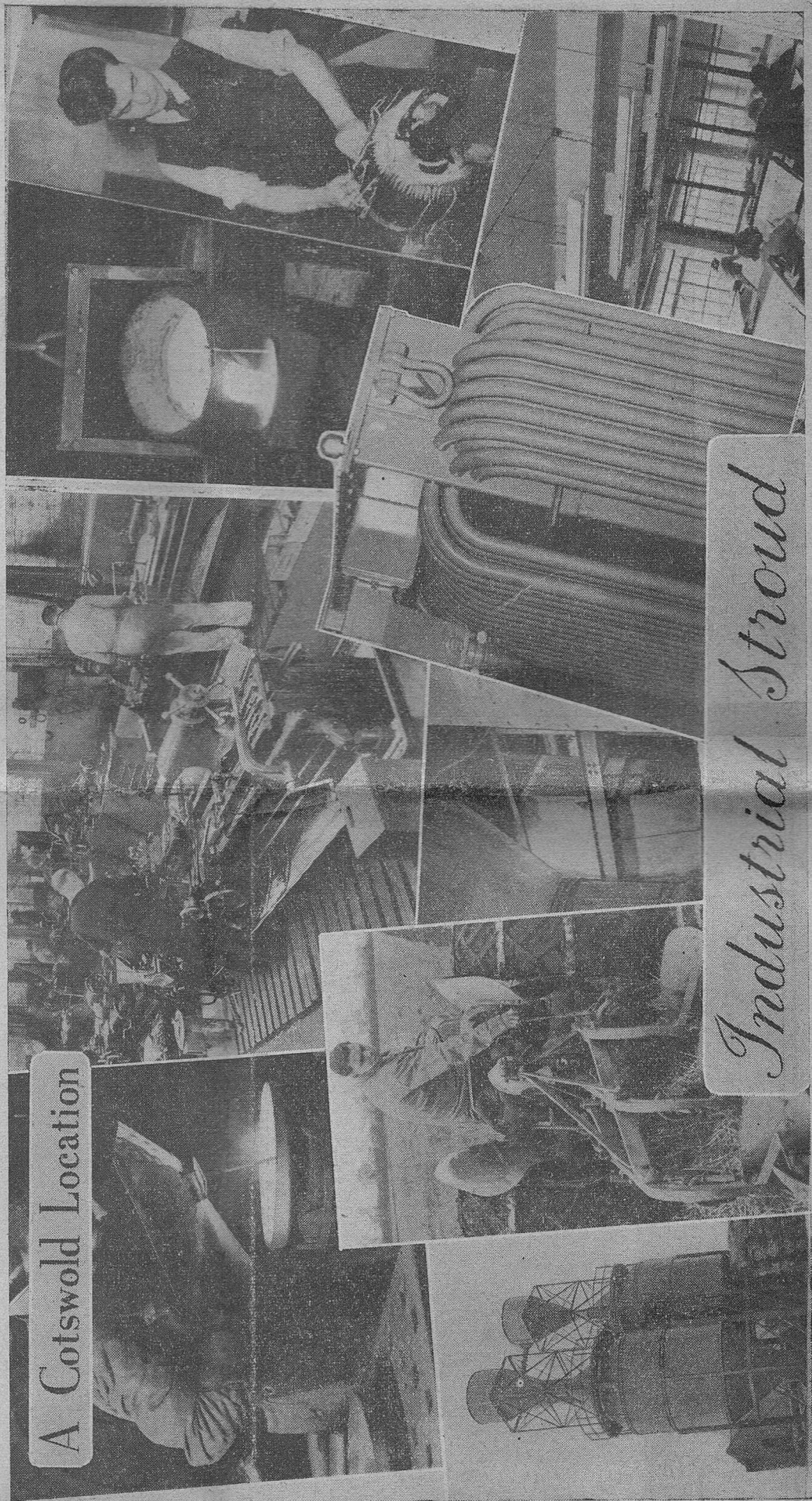


# REVIEW

# of INDUSTRY



A Cotswold Location

*Industrial Stroud*

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Because of its extremely varied character, anything in the nature of a comprehensive review of the industry up and down the Stroud valleys is a considerable undertaking. However, thanks to the co-operation of a very large proportion of the firms engaged in local industry, we have been able to compile the extremely interesting information which follows.

It will be seen that, although certain types of industry—and particularly engineering—predominate, Stroud and the surrounding district can and does supply an infinite variety of manufactured articles for home and overseas markets. Many local concerns are engaged on work of the highest importance to the nation's welfare and, it is pleasing to say, the old traditions of craftsmanship and good work are being maintained.

There is, too, a very good record of labour relations locally and the approach to staff and labour problems is, in many instances, equal if not better, to anywhere else in the country.

Any review of the Industrial life of Stroud and district must begin with the manufacture of woollen cloth and its attendant industries. Nowadays by far the greater number of people employed in the locality are absorbed by engineering of various kinds, but it was the favourable circumstances existing in this part of Gloucestershire which encouraged the development of the woollen industry and it was the skill and mechanical knowledge that industry encouraged which made it possible for other trades to come to this area with such beneficial results to all concerned.

Nowadays the number of concerns engaged in the manufacture of cloth are very few compared to the time when every stream was lined with mills busily engaged in turning out cloth or in some other textile process. However, those firms which remain, occupy a very important position in the textile

industry of this country and West of England cloth is still a product eagerly sought in every part of the world.

## CLOTH MANUFACTURE

At Lodgemore and Fromehall Mills, STRACHAN & CO. LTD. manufacture cloth more than half of which goes overseas. Canada claims the largest amount, followed by the United States, Scandinavia, Central Europe, the Far East and the Middle East. It was in 1890 that the firm adopted its present name but cloth-making was carried out on the site in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the company has discovered evidence to prove that work was carried out there in 1794. Among greatly prized relics of the past is a letter, signed by Charles I, directing Prince Rupert to come into the Stroud area and collect material to make clothes for the forces the King was then assembling against Parliament.

A little way down the valley towards Stonehouse, and we come upon the premises of MARLING & EVANS LTD. The present company was formed in 1920 from the amalgamation of the old established firms of Marling & Co. Ltd., and P. C. Evans & Sons, Ltd. But the history of woollen cloth manufacture at Stanley Mills covers generations. The present mills were built in 1813 on the site of a small manufactory, known as Giles' Mill, whose story goes back at least as far as the 17th century when it belonged to the Clutterbuck family.

Still very active is the firm of WILLIAM PLAYNE & CO. LTD., of Longfords Mills, Minchinhampton, which was founded in 1759, and was originally the family concern of Playne, of Flemish extraction. Principal products are tennis ball cloth, printing blankets, boot and shoe linings, flannels, overcoatings, woollen and worsted suitings, naval cloth, motor linings, tropical suitings and cavalry twills which are sent to all parts of the world.

## OFFSHOOT OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

In the increasingly important industry of flock manufacture the firm of Matthew Grist Ltd., Merrett's Mills, Woodchester, occupies a very important position, being the oldest and largest in the district. The business was established nearly 150 years ago on the site still occupied, its present head belongs to the fifth generation of the family in whose hands it has always remained. The various buildings that comprise the extensive premises of Merrett's Mill are a short distance from Woodchester, and the older structures contrast strikingly with the modern buildings which are equipped with the latest mechanical appliances known in the flock industry. Other work carried out is the washing, sterilising and grading of feathers and downs, the carding of white wools and the making of waddings and paddings

into sheets and rolls for the manufacturers of spring interior mattresses. The carding and cleansing of kapok (a soft vegetable downy material), and of other materials used for fillings, is also carried out.

Of more recent origin is the STROUD FLOCK Co. Ltd., of Rooksmoor Mills, which was established in 1936, to produce washed flock, cotton felt and fibre pads for the bedding and upholstery trade.

The PURIFIED FLOCK AND BEDDING CO. LTD., of the Avening Road, Nailsworth, dates back to 1883. It is noted for its "Holspring" bedding and divans and washed flock.

Another old-established flock manufacturing company is that of Richard Grist Ltd., of Lewiston Mills, Brimscombe, which was established in 1834.

## ENGINEERING

Engineering—now the giant of local industries—presents itself in almost bewildering form. To catalogue every type of article produced by local works would indeed be a great task and a complete list of every engineering undertaking would come as a surprise to many people.

At Chalford we find the GILLOT ELECTRO APPLIANCES LTD., busily engaged in the manufacture of duo coil immersion heaters, electrical convectors for room heating, Admiralty electric rangers and electric immersion heaters for the Ministry of Supply. The undertaking was initiated by the late Mr. W. A. Gillot and was incorporated in the Southern Areas Electric Corporation

Group. After being temporarily housed at Dursley, the business was transferred to Chalford in 1946 since when many extensions have been carried out. Recently the name was changed from Gillot Electric Steam Cookers to Gillot Electro Appliances to come into line with its present products. While a reasonable amount of export business is done, many of the firm's products are sold locally and go into local homes.

BENSON TOOL WORKS LTD., of Brimscombe, were established in 1918, and the principal product is loose leaf equipment. Exports are very extensive and particularly so to Canada and the U.S.A.



**HOFFMANN GLOUCESTER LTD.**, were established in their great Stonehouse factory in December, 1939, for the manufacture of ball and roller bearings for which the firm is world renowned. The factory is, of course, a subsidiary of The Hoffmann Manufacturing Company Ltd., Chelmsford, which dates back to 1898. Many of the firm's bearings are fitted to products which are exported and it would be impossible to assess just what percentage is affected, although it must be very large indeed. Alongside Hoffmann Gloucester Ltd., operates Hoffmann Tweedales Ltd., for the manufacture of bearings for the textile industry which are sent to all parts of the world. This subsidiary of The Hoffmann Manufacturing Co. Ltd., was established in April, 1945.

Along the Nailsworth Valley we come to Woodchester station, scene of an active group of industries, including that go-ahead concern **IRVING CRANES LTD.**, which, although established as recently as April, 1947, is already known internationally for its material handling equipment, mechanical development and electrical installations. Recently the firm has completed a special purpose and handling bridge incorporating unique features for the Metropolitan Water Board and a second project of considerable magnitude has now been placed with them. They are also engaged on heavy aircraft testing equipment for export to Canada which includes the largest principals yet devised for this purpose.

At Newmarket, in Nailsworth itself, **MESSRS H. J. H. KING & CO., LTD.**, have been a busy engineering concern since 1895, and their principal products are machinery for the malting trade, pneumatic conveying plant for coal, grain, etc., safety winding gear for collieries and sausage filling machines.

Just before the war the firm of **L. J. H. BALLINGER LTD.**, of Station Road, Woodchester, was formed and it has

## REVIEW OF INDUSTRY

# WIDE VARIETY IS THE KEYNOTE

One of the most important employers of labour in the area is **ERINOID LTD.**, of Lightpill Mills, Stroud, pioneers in the manufacture of plastic materials which have brought about an industrial revolution of almost unlimited importance.

The firm was founded in 1915 for the manufacture of "artificial horn"—a plastic material made from rennet casein. The factory was established in premises formerly used as a woollen mills and has remained there. The original product has become the most colourful plastic used in the button and ornamental trades and is now known throughout the world as "Erinoid." Today the firm is the largest manufacturer of casein plastics in the world and exports up to 60 per cent of its production. In addition, many other varieties of plastic material are produced in whole or in part at Lightpill and the large new laboratory block completed a few years ago, is an indication of the determination of the management to keep abreast of modern advance.

When the Company was founded only 30 workers were employed. The number has grown to 700 and the wicket on the sports ground next to the factory premises is among the best in the county and is frequently the scene of cricket matches featuring leading amateur and professional players.

**B. J. HOOPER & SONS** of Ebley Saw Mills, were established in 1915 and have a considerable output of penholders, brush handles and toy parts.

**W. E. MORTIMER LTD.**, of Gussage Mills, Toadsmoor, date back to 1926 and are engaged in wood turnery including the manufacture of tool handles and items for the domestic trade. Gussage Mills is one of the many former cloth mills of the district which used the water power, so abundantly available in the Toadsmoor Valley, to drive the machinery.

**HENRY WORKMAN LTD.**, of Woodchester Saw Mills, is one of the best-known timber concerns in Gloucestershire. The company dates back to 1870 and they are merchants for foreign as well as English timber. A large amount of wood turnery is carried on.

The **RYEFORD SAW MILLS CO. LTD.**, of Ryeford, Stonehouse, was established in 1913 and traded as The Ryeford Saw Mills Co. until 1950, when on the 29th of September in that year, it was incorporated as a limited company. Principal products are home-grown hardwood in planks, boards and scantlings, coffin sets, turned wood goods, packing case and crate timber, much of which go for export indirectly.

Perhaps because of the abundance of timber surrounding the Chalford Valley, there have been furniture craftsmen in

**THE COPELAND CHATTERSONS CO. LTD.**, of Dudbridge, Stroud, known familiarly as "Cope-Chats," is renowned for its loose-leaf and business systems and its cabinets of various kinds, which are exported to many countries. Mr. R. J. Copeland, who founded the business in 1893, holds the first patent ever given for a loose-leaf ledger and the works are equipped with the latest machinery giving a very high rate of production.

Fifteen per cent of the publications of **ARTHURS PRESS, LTD.**, of Woodchester, go overseas. This large printing undertaking employs well over a hundred hands and a whole series of important periodicals are produced in the up-to-date works. The firm was established in 1912.

Approximately 25% of the fine colour printing and high-grade catalogue work carried out by **FREDERICK STEEL & CO. LTD.**, of Ebley, goes overseas. The firm, which was founded in 1898, was among the earliest producers of loose-leaf catalogues in the country. Under its original founder the firm stood for quality printing, and this admirable aim has never been relinquished.

**MESSRS. JAMES & OWEN Ltd.**, of Russell Street, Stroud, must have been an established business for about one hundred years. Sixty years ago the business was owned by Mr. George H. James and he had certainly had it for twenty to twenty-five years. After Mr. James' death the business was formed into a limited company under the chairmanship of Mr. A. T. Ford (of Restall and Ford, auctioneers, Rowcroft), and later under Mr. Henry Workman (chairman). At this time Mr. H. M. Owen, who had been in business at "Elliotts" old shop in High Street, joined the firm under the name of James & Owen Ltd. Mr. Owen went to the First World War and never returned. Mr. Ashman Carter was chairman after this, and, in 1926, the business was purchased by Mr. E. Felix Withey, who is still the chairman and managing director.



ation for its abrasive wheel cutting-off machines and hydraulic devices. These are sent to France, Denmark, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, South Africa, Italy and Holland.

Engaged in very important work is the DORAN INSTRUMENT CO. LTD., of Stroud, which was established in August, 1945. Its products are scientific measuring instruments, most of which are exported.

THE STROUD METAL & PLATING CO. LTD., of Dudbridge, dates back to 1892. Its principal products are circulating pumps, umbrella fittings, "Garland" self-sealing lubricators, ferrous and non-ferrous foundries and all types of light press work. There are considerable exports of umbrella fittings and pumps, and the "Garland '5" self-sealing lubricator which is used very considerably in the cycle industry.

A world-famous concern with close associations with Stroud is the SPERRY GYROSCOPE COMPANY LTD., which occupies premises at Stonehouse. The company has a world-wide market for all its standard products which include marine gyro compasses, navigational instruments and equipment, aeronautical flight instruments and automatic pilots, naval and military gun-fire equipment. Sperry's are now the world's leading manufacturers of marine gyro compasses, automatic steering control equipment and aircraft instruments for all-weather operation.

The Stonehouse factory was opened in 1938 as part of a large-scale expansion programme prior to the recent war. Peak payroll at Stonehouse was 2,800 in 1944, the total payroll of the company at that time being 5,000. Stonehouse production during the war consisted largely of aircraft instruments and anti-aircraft predictor mechanisms. After the war the Stonehouse factory has been used to house a research and development unit working on gun-fire control equipment for the Royal Navy and also as a storage depot for the Company.

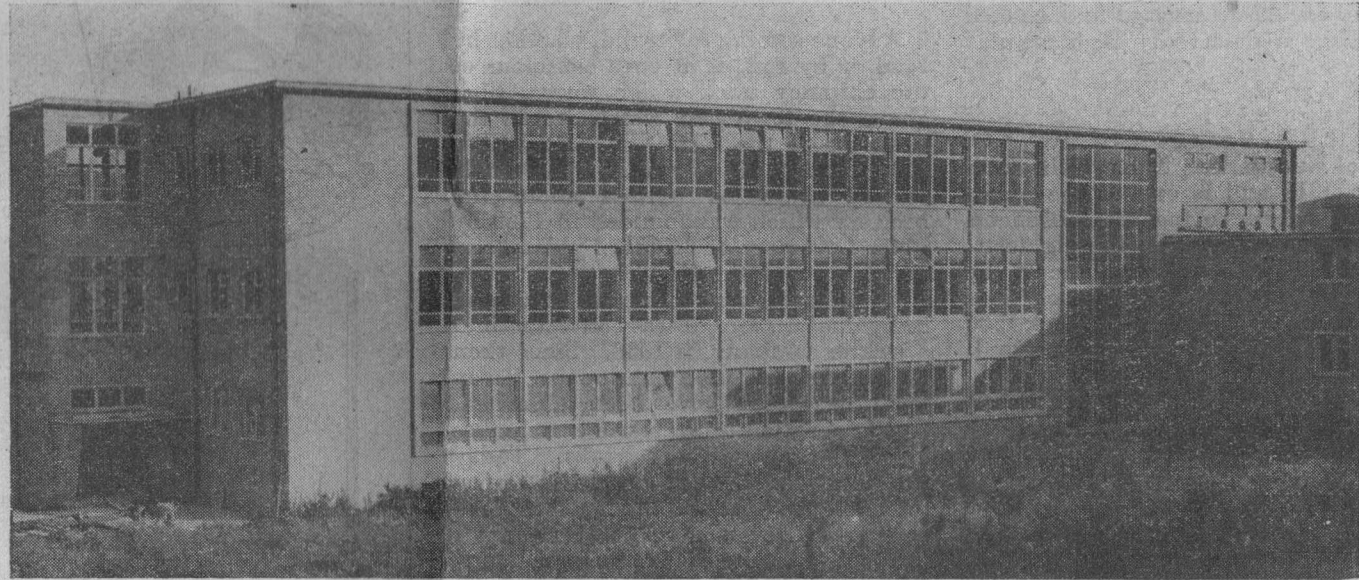
our valleys and it is to be supposed that this is due to the fact that oak, beech, elm, larch and other trees have always flourished on the Cotswold limestone.

At St. Mary's Mills, Chalford, the CHALFORD STICK CO. LTD., are engaged in general wood turnery and the manufacture of umbrella sticks and handles of all kinds. Large quantities of umbrella sticks and handles are sent overseas. The firm, which dates back to 1903, was probably the oldest factory requisitioned for the storage of aircraft parts in the last war.

CHAIRS (D. T. PARKIN) though still a comparatively young firm—it was established in 1950—has retained the policy of some of the former craftsmen in concentrating on quality rather than quantity. In the small, compact, canal-side Victoria Works, formerly a steam joinery works but which began by being used for upholstery about 20 years ago, can be seen excellent examples of the work of local furniture craftsmen. The furniture is manufactured mostly from English hardwoods, principally beech, birch and oak, although some South African hard woods are also used.

Some eighty years ago the late Mr. Walter Collins, founded a printing business in King Street, Stroud, under the title of William Collins. Mr. Walter Collins commenced his printing business, together with that of news-agent and stationer, in High Street, Stroud, in the year 1914. In 1916, the printing side of the business was transferred to the present address at the Cross, Stroud, and upon the death of Mr. Walter Collins a limited company known as Walter Collins, Ltd., was formed. The firm's principal products are printing and bookbinding.

## TRAINING CENTRE FOR FUTURE TECHNICIANS



OUR CENTENARY YEAR coincides with the opening of Stroud's magnificent new Technical College in Stratford Road. In September, Miss Florence Horsburgh, the Minister of Education, is to visit the town for the formal opening of the College, but parts have already been in use for some time.

The planning and construction of this

great building typifies the determination of the locality to keep abreast of industrial progress, which can only be done by maintaining a regular flow of skilled technicians and craftsmen into every branch of the industry. And this is exactly what the College will do. Our photograph shows the newly-completed classroom block which will surely be the

envy of the teaching profession everywhere. Rooms are flooded with daylight and every care has been taken to ensure that students work under the best conditions.

Not only Stroud, but the whole of Gloucestershire will benefit by the provision of this further addition to the district's already outstanding educational buildings.



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## TRAINING CENTRE FOR FUTURE TECHNICIANS





It is perhaps fitting that the wholesale clothing business should have found a home in an area where so much cloth of all kinds has been manufactured for generations.

HILL, PAUL & CO. LTD., of Cheapside, Stroud, produce

men's and youths' bespoke and ready-to-wear suits, overcoats and sportswear, breeches and jodhpurs, marketed under the name of 'Cotswold' clothing. The business was founded in 1902 by R. M. Hill and W. H. Paul and occupies what is reputed to be the highest factory building in Gloucestershire. Since the retirement of Mr. Hill in 1909 it has been a typical 'family' business. Mr. Paul retired in 1921 and handed over the reins to his three sons and a member of the third generation is now on the board of the company which was formed in 1948. Severely hit during the war by the transfer of workers to armaments, the Company has made a good recovery and in 1952—its jubilee year—had the highest turnover in its history.

By far the oldest wholesale clothing firm in Stroud and probably in the West of England, are HOLLOWAY BROS., LTD., whose commodious factory is in Church Street. The firm was founded in 1854—the same year as the "Journal" and its advertisements appeared in our earliest issues just as they do today. The first premises were in High Street. Products include high-standard men's wear, boys' and girls' school wear, shirts and blouses which are sent to east, west and central Africa, Rhodesia, the Middle East, France, Bermuda and many other parts of the world.

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Of vital importance to almost every other industry in the district are the gas works on the Canalside at Stroud. Nowadays they form part of the many properties owned by the South Western Gas Board and are in the Board's Cheltenham division for administrative

## REVIEW OF INDUSTRY

# LARGE PERCENTAGE of PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT

FIBRECRETE LTD., of Valley Works, Chalford, has developed from a very small manufacturing plant to treble its original capacity, and is now one of the most up-to-date of its kind in the country from the point of view of mechanical handling. Parts of the mills are as much as 400 years old, the building formerly housing a fulling mill and a stick mill before Fibrecrete took over in 1938. The firm exports its asbestos cement products to Canada, the Channel Isles, Northern Ireland and the new Kuwait Oil Fields in the Persian Gulf.

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Quite different to all the other establishments in the area is S. G. BAILEY & Co., Limited, of Stafford Mills, Stoud. Established in 1888, the firm is engaged in the manufacture of paints and varnishes, manganese oxides and manganese salts. Many of its manganese products are exported.

\* \* \*

Among the many industries to be found at Stonehouse is the company known as the STONEHOUSE PAPER AND BAG MILLS LTD., which dates back to 1922. Paper bags, counter rolls, pockets, tubes, rubber printing plates and stamps are among the products which come from the Mills and many nationally known foods are packed in "Stonehouse" bags. The

The manufacture of pins has been associated with the pleasant old town of Painswick for centuries. The one firm now engaged in the process

is MESSRS. SAVORY & SONS LTD. of Brookhouse Mills, which

dates back to 1847. Hairpins, hair-grips, paper grips, ticket pins, etc., are manufactured and markets are found not only in this country but in the Dominions, Colonies and in many foreign states.

\* \* \*

MESSRS. A. G. SAVAGE, of the Imperial Engineering Works, Stonehouse, was established in 1930, and the firm is engaged in general engineering, special purpose machinery, welding and steel fabrications. It is interesting to note that prior to the war the firm repaired practically all the water wheels that were still in use in this area, and most of the original wood patterns are retained. These waterwheels have dwindled in numbers, but there are still a few giving good service, including one at Painswick.

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At Ebley, since 1948, the MID-GLOS. CO-OPERATIVE FEDERAL SOCIETY LTD., has been operating its own laundry, where dry cleaning and carpet cleaning is also carried on in extensive fashion.

\* \* \*

An industry of outstanding importance is that of STROUD CREAMERY LTD. at whose modern premises in Lansdown milk is pasteurised to free it from bacteria and other foreign matter. The new premises is a post war development and in addition to the Pasteurising plant there is machinery to deal with the cleaning and sterilising of bottles. Pasteurising is carried out under the most hygienic conditions using the latest scientific equipment. Members of the public and organisations may see the process any morning by appointment with the firm.

from the Stroud Journal, July 4th, 1902 —" Mr. W. J. Snape, clerk and surveyor to the Stroud Water Navigation Coy. wishes to deny the statement that he recently visited the canal bridge near the Ship Inn, Stonehouse, in company with the chairman of the parish council".



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Of vital importance to almost every other industry in the district are the gas works on the Canalside at Stroud. Nowadays they form part of the many properties owned by the South Western Gas Board and are in the Board’s Cheltenham division for administrative purposes, but the first gas producing plant in Stroud began work as long ago as 1833 and the old STROUD GAS LIGHT & COKE CO. played a very great part in the development of local industries during the past 100 years, to say nothing of making modern street lighting possible. In addition to the manufacture of gas many valuable by-products come from the Canalside works.

\* \* \*

It is not surprising that local farms produce excellent pigs and that the manufacture of bacon and pork products are of considerable importance in this part of the world. For instance, SMITH ROGERS & CO LTD., of Ebley, have been in the trade since 1892 and their bacon, lard, sausage and cooked meats have a deservedly high reputation.

HILLIER’S BACON CURING CO. LTD., of Newmarket, Nailsworth, dates back to 1819 and is one of the oldest surviving bacon curing establishments in the British Isles.

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At Woodchester, partly on the site of what was once a cloth mill, is to be found THE STROUD PIANO CO. LTD., whose instruments are mainly for export and it is not at all unusual to see lorries leaving the works loaded with crates labelled for ports on the other side of the world. The company was founded in London in 1906 and removed to Woodchester five years later.

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Anyone coming to Stroud, whether by road or by rail, is at once conscious of the chimney stack which towers high above the town and which marks the premises of the STROUD BREWERY CO. LTD., of Rowcroft. A whole history could be written about the brewery which was founded in 1760.

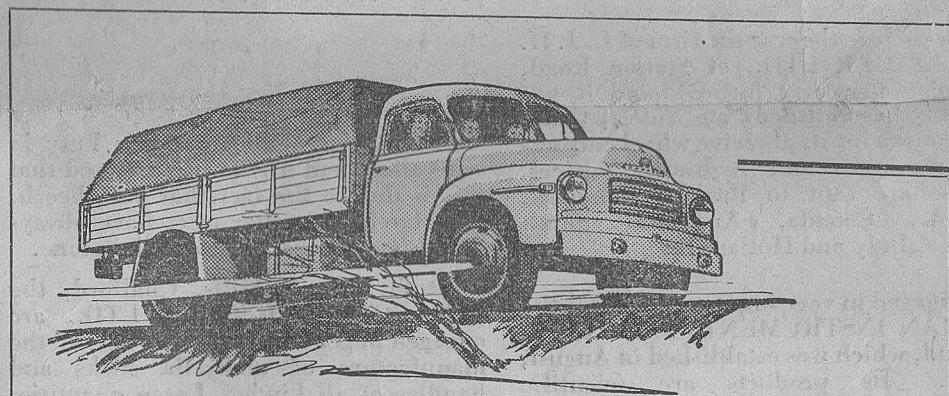
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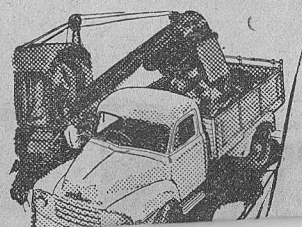
## Bedfords pay in every way

### Better Engineering

You get more work out of a Bedford truck because more is **built into it**. You have the choice of petrol or diesel power -- the best of both.

### Better Value

Bedford is Britain’s largest producer and





the reins to his three sons and a member of the third generation is now on the board of the company which was formed in 1948. Severely hit during the war by the transfer of workers to armaments, the Company has made a good recovery and in 1952—its jubilee year—had the highest turnover in its history.

By far the oldest wholesale clothing firm in Stroud and probably in the West of England, are HOLLOWAY BROS., LTD., whose commodious factory is in Church Street. The firm was founded in 1854—the same year as the "Journal" and its advertisements appeared in our earliest issues just as they do today. The first premises were in High Street. Products include high-standard men's wear, boys' and girls' school wear, shirts and blouses which are sent to east, west and central Africa, Rhodesia, the Middle East, France, Bermuda and many other parts of the world.

\* \* \*

Of vital importance to almost every other industry in the district are the gas works on the Canalside at Stroud. Nowadays they form part of the many properties owned by the South Western Gas Board and are in the Board's Cheltenham division for administrative purposes, but the first gas producing plant in Stroud began work as long ago as 1833 and the old STROUD GAS LIGHT & COKE CO. played a very great part in the development of local industries during the past 100 years, to say nothing of making modern street lighting possible. In addition to the manufacture of gas many valuable by-products come from the Canalside works.

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It is not surprising that local farms produce excellent pigs and that the manufacture of bacon and pork products are of considerable importance in this part of the world. For instance, SMITH ROGERS & CO LTD., of Ebley, have been in the trade since 1892 and their bacon, lard, sausage and cooked meats have a deservedly high reputation.

HILLIER'S BACON CURING CO.

are as much as 400 years old, the building formerly housing a fulling mill and a stick mill before Fibrecrete took over in 1938. The firm exports its asbestos cement products to Canada, the Channel Isles, Northern Ireland and the new Kuwait Oil Fields in the Persian Gulf.

\* \* \*

Quite different to all the other establishments in the area is S. G. BAILEY & Co., Limited, of Stafford Mills, Stoud. Established in 1888, the firm is engaged in the manufacture of paints and varnishes, manganese oxides and manganese salts. Many of its manganese products are exported.

\* \* \*

Among the many industries to be found at Stonehouse is the company known as the STONEHOUSE PAPER AND BAG MILLS LTD., which dates back to 1922. Paper bags, counter rolls, pockets, tubes, rubber printing plates and stamps are among the products which come from the Mills and many nationally known foods are packed in "Stonehouse" bags. It is interesting to note that some of the machines used have been completely produced in the company's own engineering works.

\* \* \*

At Woodchester, partly on the site of what was once a cloth mill, is to be found THE STROUD PIANO CO. LTD., whose instruments are mainly for export and it is not at all unusual to see lorries leaving the works loaded with crates labelled for ports on the other side of the world. The company was founded in London in 1906 and removed to Woodchester five years later.

\* \* \*

Anyone coming to Stroud, whether by road or by rail, is at once conscious of the chimney stack which towers high above the town and which marks the premises of the STROUD BREWERY

they have kept abreast of the times with their equipment.

\* \* \*

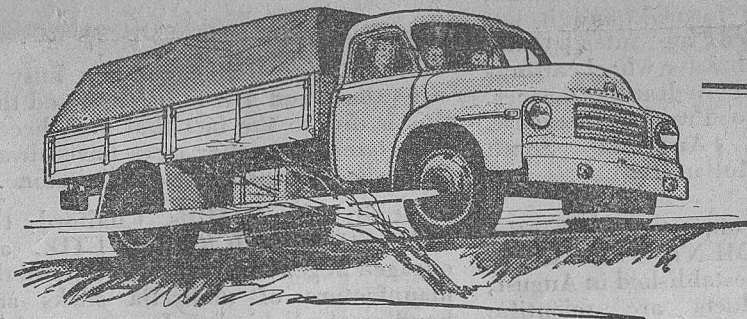
At Ebley, since 1948, the MID-GLOS. CO-OPERATIVE FEDERAL SOCIETY LTD., has been operating its own laundry, where dry cleaning and carpet cleaning is also carried on in extensive fashion.

\* \* \*

An industry of outstanding importance is that of STROUD CREAMERY LTD. at whose modern premises in Lansdown milk is pasteurised to free it from bacteria and other foreign matter. The new premises is a post war development and in addition to the Pasteurising plant there is machinery to deal with the cleaning and sterilising of bottles. Pasteurising is carried out under the most hygienic conditions using the latest scientific equipment. Members of the public and organisations may see the process any morning by appointment with the firm.

perial Engineering Works, Stonehouse, was established in 1930, and the firm is engaged in general engineering, special purpose machinery, welding and steel fabrications. It is interesting to note that prior to the war the firm repaired practically all the water wheels that were still in use in this area, and most of the original wood patterns are retained. These waterwheels have dwindled in numbers, but there are still a few giving good service, including one at Painswick.

from the Stroud Journal, July 4th, 1902 —" Mr. W. J. Snape, clerk and surveyor to the Stroud Water Navigation Coy. wishes to deny the statement that he recently visited the canal bridge near the Ship Inn, Stonehouse, in company with the chairman of the parish council".



## Bedfords pay in every way

### Better Engineering

You get more work out of a Bedford truck because more is **built into it**. You have the choice of petrol or diesel power -- the best of both.

### Better Value

