

The first major Works project to be carried out in the new Assembly Shop was the 100 kW transmitter for the new Ghana broadcasting station

The Rivenhall Story

MIDWAY between Braintree and Witham lies the disused airfield of Rivenhall. In November 1949 Marconi's Radar Division established an outpost there under the General Foreman, Jack Frost. The original twenty or so people were joined by others and the hangar and assortment of Nissen huts and brick buildings became an important radar production centre, shrouded in secrecy and doing a great deal for the Company in contributing to the country's defence scheme.

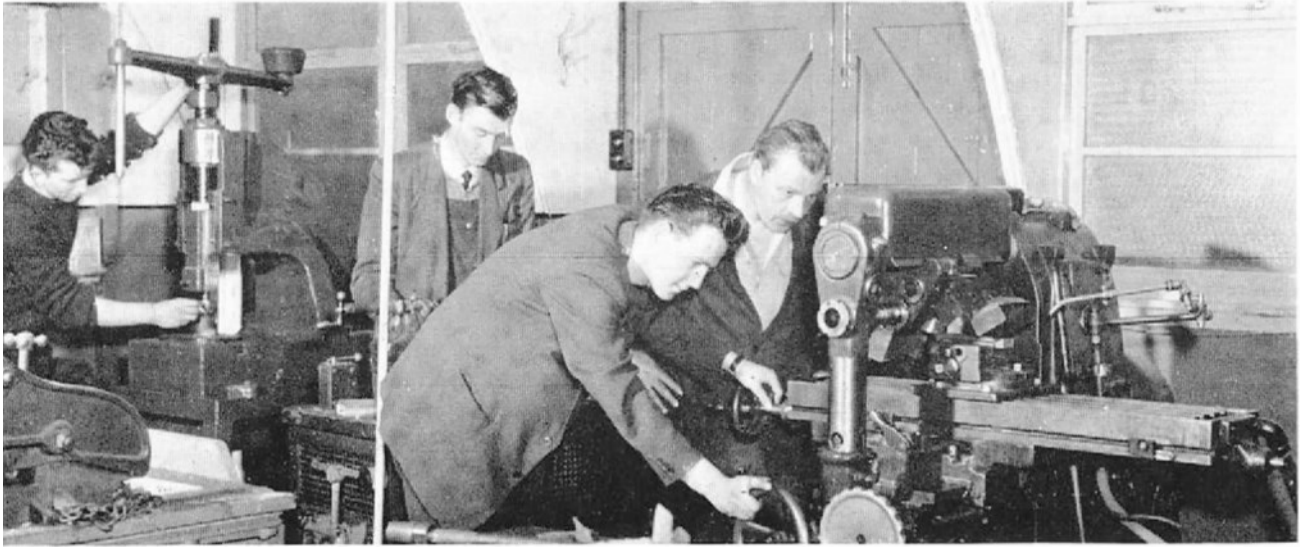
In 1959 the emphasis changed. The Works had already staked an interest in Rivenhall, for the hangar had long been used to house vehicles of all types in which equipment was being installed, but by now D. S. Redhead, Works

Superintendent, needed more assembly sections and in August much of the airfield was integrated completely with the New Street Works.

The changes necessary to convert it into a factory became really apparent about a year later. The hangar, in addition to being used for vehicle work, now contains Assembly Section 17(R), complementary in every way to New Street's Section 17. This building-

Standing left to right, R. J. Williams, Superintendent Rivenhall, E. Perkins, Foreman Section 17(R) and Bob Brittain, chargehand, study the drawings of one of the units in the 100 kW transmitter on which Arnold Campion, fitter/wireman assembler, is completing the assembly of the feeder coupling truck





In the Machine Shop, which meets the needs of the Assembly and Repair Sections are, left to right, instrument makers Colin Shute at the press, John Bentley at the lathe and Harry Wilson and leading hand, "Buck" Ryan, at the mill



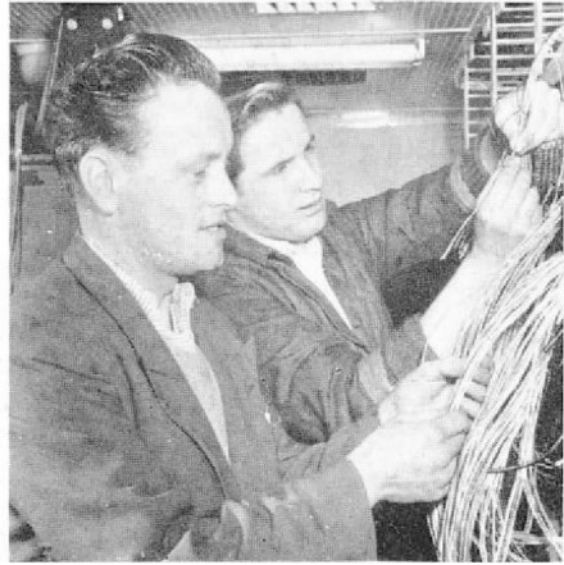
In the Cableform Section Sid Steele, charge-hand, watches Mrs. Doreen Staines while she makes a cableform for a Mark IV camera control panel

within-a-building, with its thin brick walls, plasterboard roof and very efficient heating system, has been designed to ensure maximum adaptability; benches can be moved; power is supplied through leads from points in the ceiling; the doors are large enough to give access to the biggest vehicle if, for any reason, installation needs to be done here rather than in the hangar itself. Until recently a quarter of the total length of the building was occupied by the 100 kW transmitter for Ghana, the first major project to be undertaken in the new Assembly Shop, manned largely by ex-Radar Division people and new, local recruits under the foremanship of E. Perkins, himself an ex-Radar man.

Familiar faces from Chelmsford brought home the reality of integration; from New Street last summer came C. Collen, Foreman of Section 19, and the majority of the men of the Repair Section which has transferred to a building alongside the hangar; in a nearby Nissen hut a small Machine Shop with a comprehensive range of equipment has been set up at one end to serve the Assembly and Repair Sections, while at the other is the Cableform Section, staffed by fifteen local women and two from Chelmsford.



In Section 17(R), left to right, trainee wiremen assemblers David White and Ray Springett, and wiremen assembler Harold Watcham are at one of the benches building up distribution units for a 1 kW transmitter



In Number 1 hangar, left to right, Cyril Hollocks and Gerald Pearson, wiremen assemblers, terminate the leads to multichannel telephone racks for U.S.A.F. microwave communication vehicles

In the Repair Section, left to right, Ken Tyler, chargehand, watches Ian Lindsley working on a unit for an HM100, while Percy Carter, who has been with the Company for twenty-five years, carries out adjustments to a tripod head assembly used to support a microwave TV link



Jean Oakley, demonstrator, centre, examines part of the cable assembly upon which Barbara Johnson, left, and Mrs. Ivy Andrews are working



Completing this community on what is known as number 1 site are the administration block and the canteen.

Hop into a car, drive about three-quarters of a mile round the perimeter track and you come to number 2 site comprising another collection of Nissen huts and buildings grouped around a hangar. This was where the Wayfarers Association once ran doss houses for tramps and where, until Marconi's took over the site about two years ago, 2000 Polish refugees were encamped. Now the huts are used by Stores and the hangar is devoted, at one end, to packing equipments made or marshalled at Rivenhall, and at the other, to the hand-painting of radar aerials and other large pieces of equipment.

Rivenhall still maintains its association with Radar Division, but under R.

Charlton, Assistant Works Superintendent, and later under R. J. Williams, Superintendent Rivenhall, it has swiftly acquired a new identity; it has become an important New Street extension, and of the 150 or so employed there, about 110 are Works people.

Veterans Committee



Members of this year's committee are, left to right in the back row: R. Kidd, H. D. Luxon, D. French, F. S. Mockford, R. Ferguson. Front row: T. A. van der Vlies, J. R. C. Johnson, E. H. Cooper, E. Praill, president, C. T. Sanders, vice-president, and C. J. Simpson. W. H. Whiddon, treasurer, is not in the picture