



Rochester Avionic Archives Newsletter

From the Curator

Well we have finally moved the Collection and Archive but not quite where I had expected. We are now located on the airfield side of the Main Hanger overlooking the disused Phase III Building. We have a magnificent amount of space with a larger storage area and two large offices one of which we share with the Royal Aeronautical Society. The partnership between the RAA and the RAeS is long standing and of mutual benefit. Moving 1000 objects and all the pictures, negatives and so on was not easy but only a very few things were damaged. I would like to thank the team and the Company for their efforts to get us back straight again.

We still find some odd things around such as lots of boxes from the VC-10, AQS Sonar systems and the short-lived In-Flight Entertainment system. The greatest acquisition however was to find another TSR2 Head Up Display and Control Panel on eBay! So, the collection now has two out of the twenty made. Our website is always changing and shortly we hope to redesign the Home Page to lose the irritating scrolling Platform pictures. Most of our work at present has been on the Brochures which of course give a great source of information for website notes. Many thanks to the people who send in corrections and additions we really do need and appreciate these. The RAA has been active supporting various Company Award ceremonies with equipment and Newspapers and as a routine can support such things as legal matters with information from the archives.

Chris Bartlett



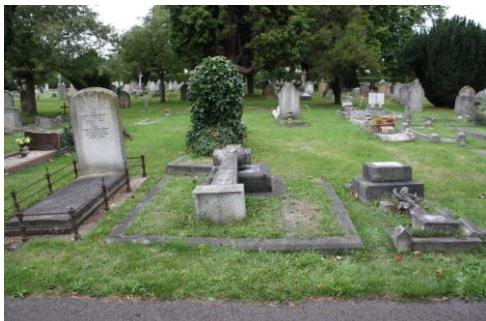
Some views of the new Museum



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The Elliott Brothers



William Elliott), maker of scientific instruments, was born in 1780 or On 14 April 1795 he was bound apprentice for seven years to William Backwell, compass and drawing instrument maker, of Tash Street, Gray's Inn Lane. He was re-bound in May 1795 in the Coach and Coach Harness Makers' Company; in 1804 he became a freeman and bound his own first apprentice. This was probably the year when he commenced his own business.

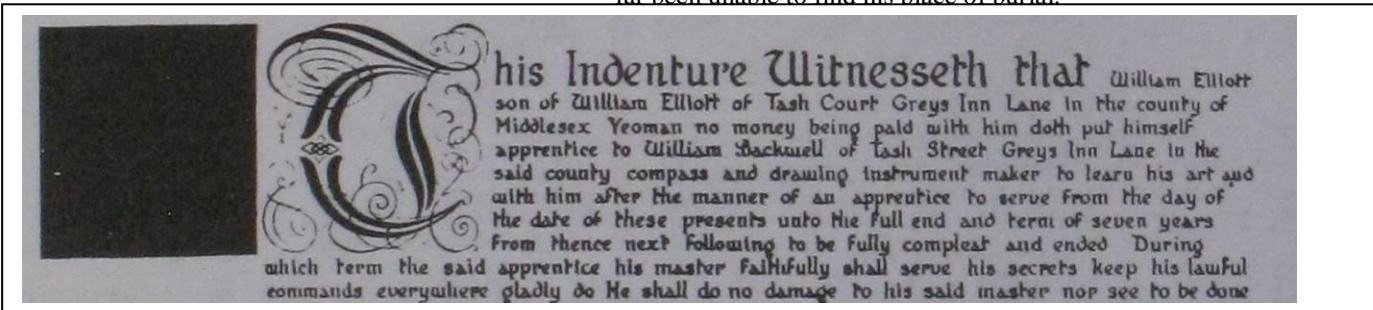
From 1817 to 1827 his business was at 21 Great Newport Street, and from then until 1833 at 227 High Holborn. His home and business were at 268 High Holborn from 1835 to 1849 and at 56 Strand from 1850 until his death.

In 1804 Elliott married Elizabeth Thrale, or Thrah, at St Martin-in-the-Fields. Their son, William (b. 1804), studied at Queens' College, Cambridge, and entered the Church of England. From Elliott's second marriage, to Anne Berner, there was a daughter, Anne. His third wife was Emma Paget, the widow of a Captain Kelly. Their children were Frederick Henry (b. 1819), George Augustus (b. 1821), Charles Alfred (b. 1822), Eliza (b. 1829), and possibly others. Frederick and Charles were the Elliott Brothers of our Company

Last August we located the grave of Charles Alfred Elliott in Twickenham Cemetery. Charles Alfred Elliott was born in 1822 and was apprenticed to his father as mathematical instrument maker on 27 October 1837 for seven years and became a partner in 1850. He was married; his wife's name was probably Maria Sarvis; there was a daughter Gertrude. He retired before 1873 and died at Teddington, Middlesex on 9 October 1877. He was buried in Twickenham Cemetery on 12th October 1877 (Section A, Grave 314 Front Row which is easily found just to the East of the Chapel. The large cross had been taken down for safety reasons and it was easy to see why as there had been minimal mortar holding it in place.

His wife, Maria, died aged 62 on the 25th April 1880 and was buried in Charles' grave in Twickenham Cemetery on 5th May 1880. Their daughter Gertrude died on 24th October 1902 and is buried with her parents and the inscription on the Cross notes that she was the beloved wife of H.S. Sanders-Clark.

Frederick Henry Elliott was born in 1819. He was privately educated at Baldock and Edmonton, then obtained his master's degree at Christ's College, Cambridge in 1848. He practised as a surveying engineer before joining his father and brother in business in 1850. The company prospered, its success attributed to Frederick's business ability. In 1848 he married Susan Pearse, but we cannot find a record of any children. He died of a stroke in his office at 449 Strand, London on 18 January 1873. Despite knowing his address as Langley Lodge in Rushey Green Catford we have so far been unable to find his place of burial.



Part of the Apprenticeship Indenture of William Elliott.

From the Newspapers and Brochures

This Brochure shows the wide range of platforms that the Company had fitted with Flight Controls between 1948 to 1988

GEC AVIONICS

The RAA has most of the FARL Annual Reports. This one is from 1978. Is that Keith Mitchell but who is the lady?

A Poem about moving from the Marconi Avionics News.
The little cartoon about the air-conditioning made me
think of the Corsair Building too because now that it
finally works the place is being mothballed!

Has anyone seen ADD?

The years keep swiftly fleeting

— We have snow and mist and rain,

Then comes the silly season

— We're on the move again.

In ADD Production

— It's a job to settle in,

No sooner have we grown our roots

— We pull them up ag'in.

They used to call us DAD

— Before they changed our name,

Then we trekked across the airfield

— Thus began the moving game.

Some of us still remember

— In the dim and distant past,

Being told, "Don't worry lads"

— "This move will be the last."

It didn't work out quite that way

— We don't suppose it will,

We bet in 25 years' time

— We'll be a-moving still.

We moved into the Towers Block

— A shop floor bright and new,

But like the snows that melt in spring.

— Those days were numbered too.

Production grafted cheerily

— Oh! what a happy band,

"They" said "My word. Your output's great

— We really must expand."

So once more, man the trolleys

— The barrows and the trucks,

Load up your wire and soldering irons,

— And your sticky pots of flux.

What joyous times we did enjoy

— Us fellows and the wenches,

No better pastime can there be

— Than humping racks and benches.

Then came the move to end all moves

— Excitement filled the air,

We were honoured to be residents

— Of the "Super New Corsair".

Alas! It's goodbye Corsair Building

— We've all enjoyed our stay,

We loved you smart surroundings

— But we've got to move away.

Well they've started laying odds now

— Though there's not a favourite yet,

Boreham Wood? or Nailesea?

— No!... ATLANTA'S my best bet.

Anon



1983 Iss 51 Marconi Avionics News

These Posters featured science fiction vehicles and could be highly collectable.

Negative Archive



The Belfast PDU and the Binocular PDU from 1967.

Recent acquisitions



The TSR2 Pilot's Display Unit found on eBay

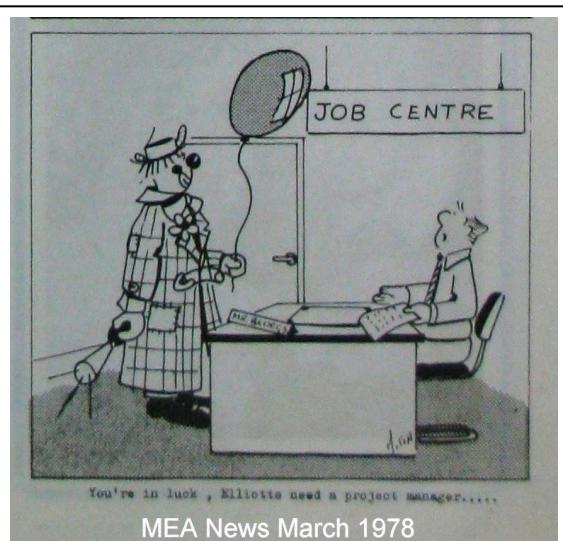


The FF Amplifier Test Set of 1957. Does anyone know what it tested?



The Yaw Rate Platform for the VC-10 found in Corsair Building

And finally! Two snippets from the papers



LOST ISLAND

The birds of GEC Rochester deplore the destruction of the traffic island near the Phase III building. This has been an oasis in a desert of concrete and cars for the past few years. Trees had been planted on it, and on sunny days in the summer (few it is true), between 12 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. featherless birds of every kind, Tower birds, Portacabin birds, Hangar birds, Phase III birds to name a few could be seen to alight and rest, for between half an hour to an hour during feeding time, surely this tiny haven could have been left for the enjoyment of many. Not destroyed or vandalised for the use of a few. Bird watchers have now been deprived of what little pleasure during a break from what has now become for many, unfortunately, a claustrophobic working day.

GEC Av News Aug 1987