Aircraft Construction Industry: Sources

How to use this list of sources

This is a list of some of the collections that may provide a useful starting point when researching this subject. It gives the collection reference and a brief description of the kinds of records held in the collections. More detailed lists are available in the searchroom and from our online catalogue. Enquiries should be directed to the Duty Archivist, see contact details at the end of this source list.

Barr & Stroud Ltd; optical instrument engineers, Glasgow, Scotland (GUAS Ref: UGD 295)
Specialising in naval and military rangefinders, Barr & Stroud had also been a major supplier of periscopes, binoculars and signalling equipment and continues to be one of the world’s leading military optics firms. Their range included bombing, gunnery and photographic sights for aircraft; anti-aircraft fire control equipment; aircraft gun mounts and indicating equipment. Plans and records of orders for such equipment survive with the collection.

- Advice books: 1870-1961
- Agreements (unlisted); property records: 1917, 1929
- Cash books: 1888-1956
- Certificates of examination and guarantee: 1931-75
- Correspondence: 1892-1975
- Directors’ papers, including those of:
  - Dr W Strang: 1892-1974
  - Dr Barr: 1898-1930
- Journals: 1895-1966
- Ledgers: 1897-1970
- Letterbooks: 1893-1984
- Management committee minutes: 1977-83
- Memorandum and articles of association: 1912-64
- Negative and photographs of products and employees 20th century; plans (product 770 onwards, incomplete series): 1902-72
- Optical division minutes: 1980-88
- Orders and contracts: 1900-88
- Organisational papers: 1920-77
- Outward invoice books: 1952-74
- Patent records: 1860-1982
- Pilkington PE minutes: 1979-80
- Publications: 1890-1997
- Scrapbooks: 1895-1954
- Share records: 1913-77
- Staff club minutes: 1918-20
- Summary accounts: 1912-88
- Technical specifications, progress reports and related papers: 1855-1989
- Tracing books vols. 24-31: 1895-1974
- Wage and salary records: 1898-1981
- Visitors’ books: 1898-1981
Beardmores, William & Co Ltd; steel manufacturers and engineers, Glasgow, Scotland
(GUAS Ref: UGD 100/1 and UGD 179)
Beardmores were heavy engineers who supplied tanks, artillery and aircraft in the two World Wars, as well as the naval ordnance and armoured plate in which they specialised. Evidence of their aeroplane and airship production can be found in photographs and magazine articles as well as in the firm’s ledgers.

- Agenda books: 1903-29
- Annual general meeting and press reports: 1930-48
- Armour plate extension files: 1936-57
- Catalogues: c1914-27
- Directors’ attendance books: 1913-40
- Financial records: 1901-65
- Minutes: 1902-76
- Miscellaneous volumes and files including legal agreements, correspondence, financial and printed ephemera: 1864-1969
- Photographs: c1910-32
- Plans of diesel locomotive: 1930
- Press cuttings: 1900-65
- Salary records: 1902-37
- Visitors books: 1914-68

Morris Furniture Co Ltd; furniture manufacturers, Glasgow, Scotland (GUAS Ref: UGD 335)
Morris’s wood processing skills were impressed during the Second World War for the production of aircraft fuselages and components and rifles. They pioneered the development of composite propellers for training and second line aircraft. Records of their wartime production include drawings, reports, cost and order books and correspondence files.

- Correspondence: 1918-80
- Diaries: 1949-75
- Director’s minutes: 1914-70
- Finance records: 1934-82
- Photographs and glass negatives: c1920-93
- Plans and drawings: 1925-92
- Production records and order books: 1936-78
- Publications and publicity: c1850-c1990
- Title deeds: 1833-1959
- Trade magazines and catalogues: 1914-97
- Valuations: 1933-46

Napier Collection; engineers and shipbuilders (GUAS Ref: DC 90)
The Napier shipbuilding firm produced military aircraft during the First World War. Some photographs survive in the collection.

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