

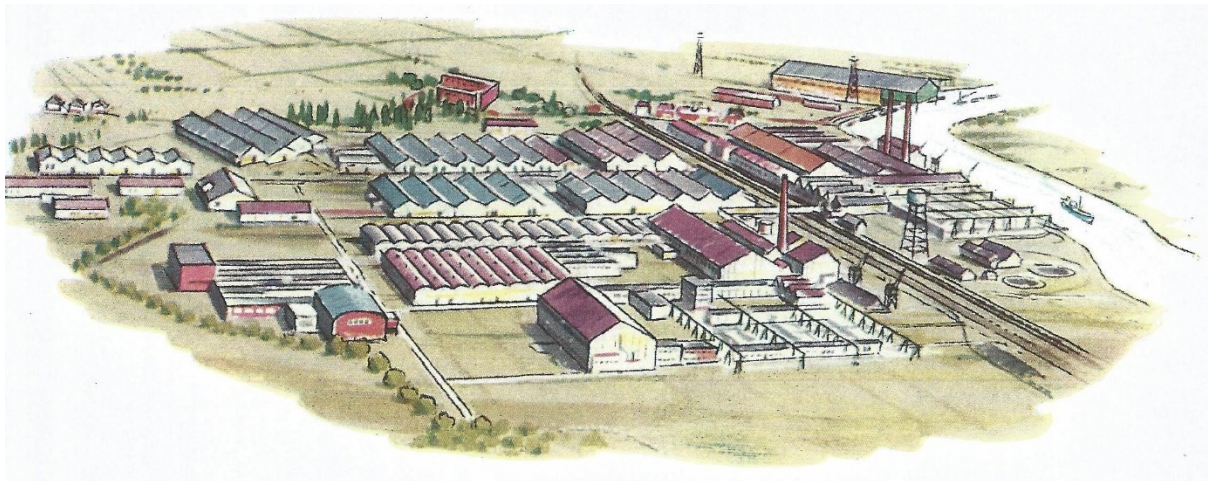
Aylesford

As an example of Group methods and policy in action, the mills, factories and services at Aylesford have been selected for an illustrated 'close-up' in the following pages. Reed Group mills and factories are spread throughout England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.



Aylesford, where 6,600 people are employed, is interesting in itself as one of the largest production centres of paper and converted products in the World. Also, it is a graphic illustration in a single area of the development and diversification of Group activities and the way in which several markedly different operations are being successfully conducted under one comprehensive long-term strategy.

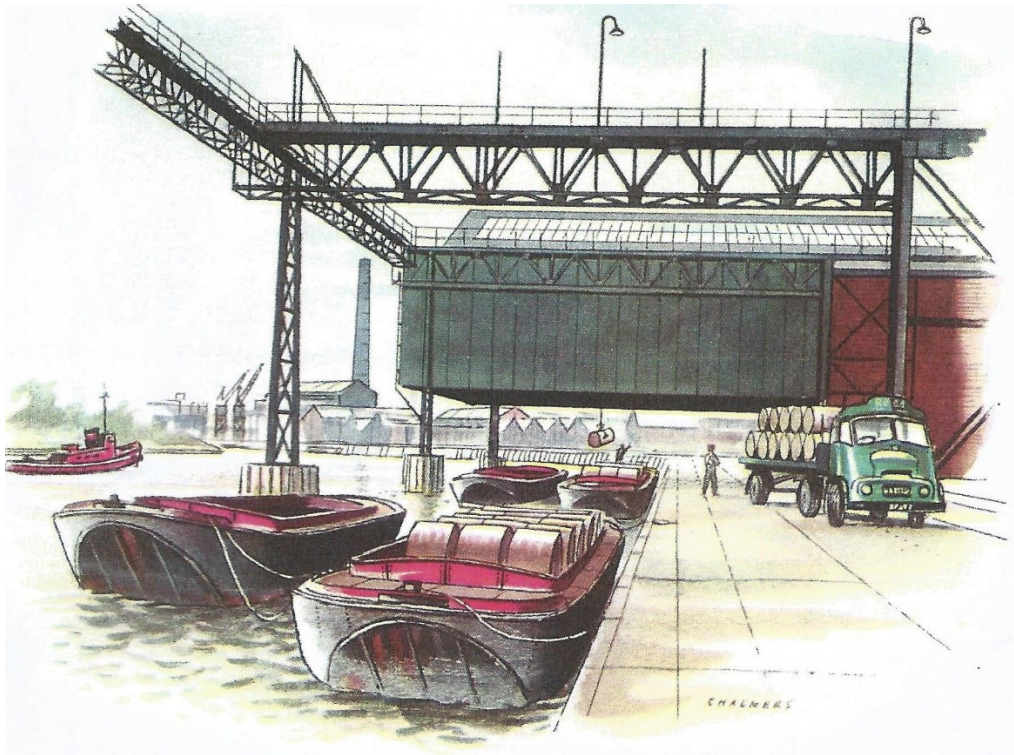
The development of the Aylesford site has made possible the provision of a central pool of resources and services on which all Group members can draw, so that in effect each member has behind it the technical, financial and commercial strength of the others. No company on its own could maintain the research and development and other services to which, as a Group member, it has immediate access and which are of vital practical value in the competitive situation prevailing today.



This illustration shows the way in which the Aylesford site hugs the river Medway. The large building in the background is the new export store, and in the foreground is seen the machine house in which is installed the Group's newest papermaking machine.

The Aylesford site of the Reed Paper Group occupies some 500 acres of land in the Medway valley midway between Rochester and Maidstone in Kent. It is immediately possible to appreciate the foresight shown in acquiring this site as a centre for papermaking and allied activities. It is conveniently linked by water to the port of Rochester, where cargoes of imported wood pulp and other materials are transferred to lighters for delivery to the site's own wharves. It has first class road and rail connections with London; New Hythe railway station (built many years ago at the instigation of the Company) stands within the site area, which has a nine-mile network of sidings. The large quantity of fuel required can readily reach the site from the neighbouring Kent coal field and other sources by rail and water.

At the same time, Group policy has ensured that individual companies retain their own identity and traditions and the power to think and act for themselves in everyday operations — a vital factor in maintaining good relations with customers. This combination of central resources with decentralised company operation is another distinguishing feature of the Group's progress.



Lighters being loaded with newsprint for export. The large export store xv as completed during 1958

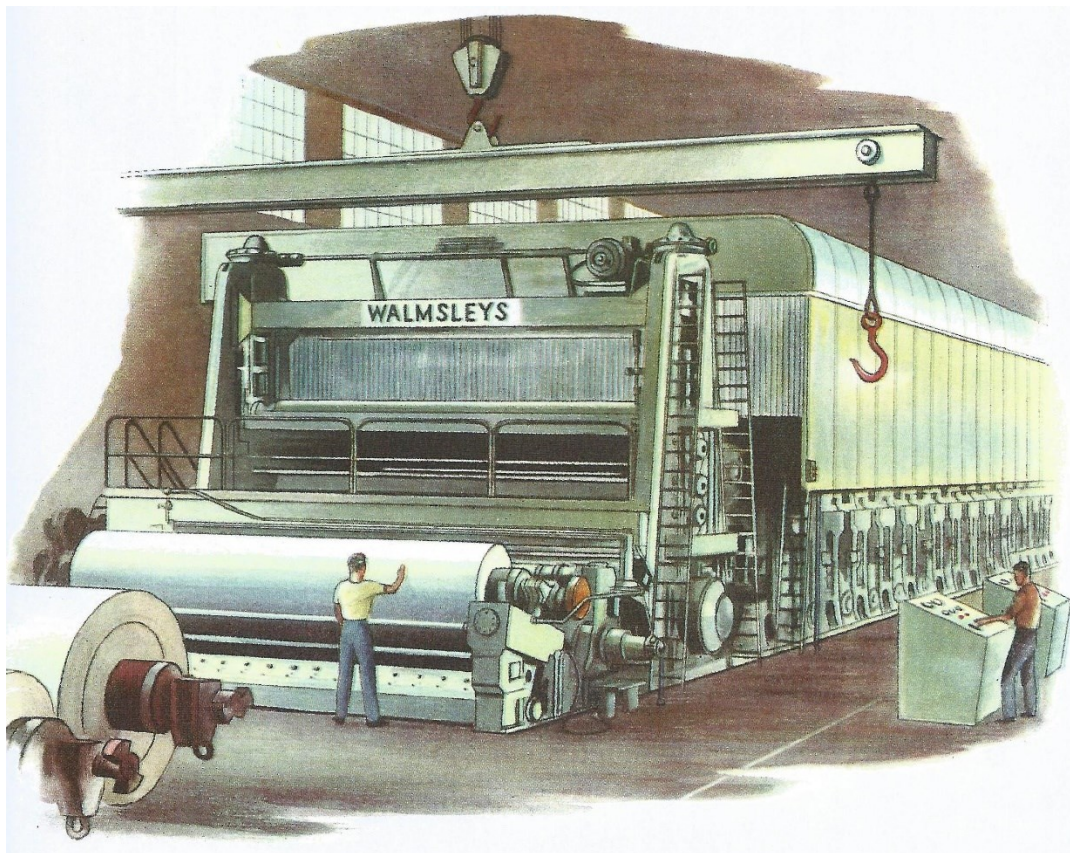


China clay from Cornwall being unloaded into bunkers

Water, also required on a prodigious scale for paper-making, is available.

Moreover, the size of the site offered ample scope for even the most ambitious plans for expansion entertained at the time of its acquisition.

The land was purchased by Albert E. Reed & Company, Limited over a period of years after the first world war, and in 1922 Aylesford's first two machines — for newsprint and other printing papers — came into production. Between then and the outbreak of the second world war, a further seven machines were installed, making a total of nine. Machines numbered 1-8 were housed in what is now called the East Mill, adjacent to the riverside. A new mill, the West Mill, was required for No. 9 machine which, when installed, was one of the largest and fastest newsprint machines in the world, and it was at this mill that a further three machines ~ making machine glazed papers — were installed between 1948 and 1956. In March 1958 the company's latest machine came into operation. No. 13 machine embodies several new design features making it capable of producing both mechanical printing papers and newsprint at very high speeds, and its modern design provides for a high degree of automatic control.



The new NO. 13 machine is capable of producing both mechanical Printings and newsprint at very high speeds

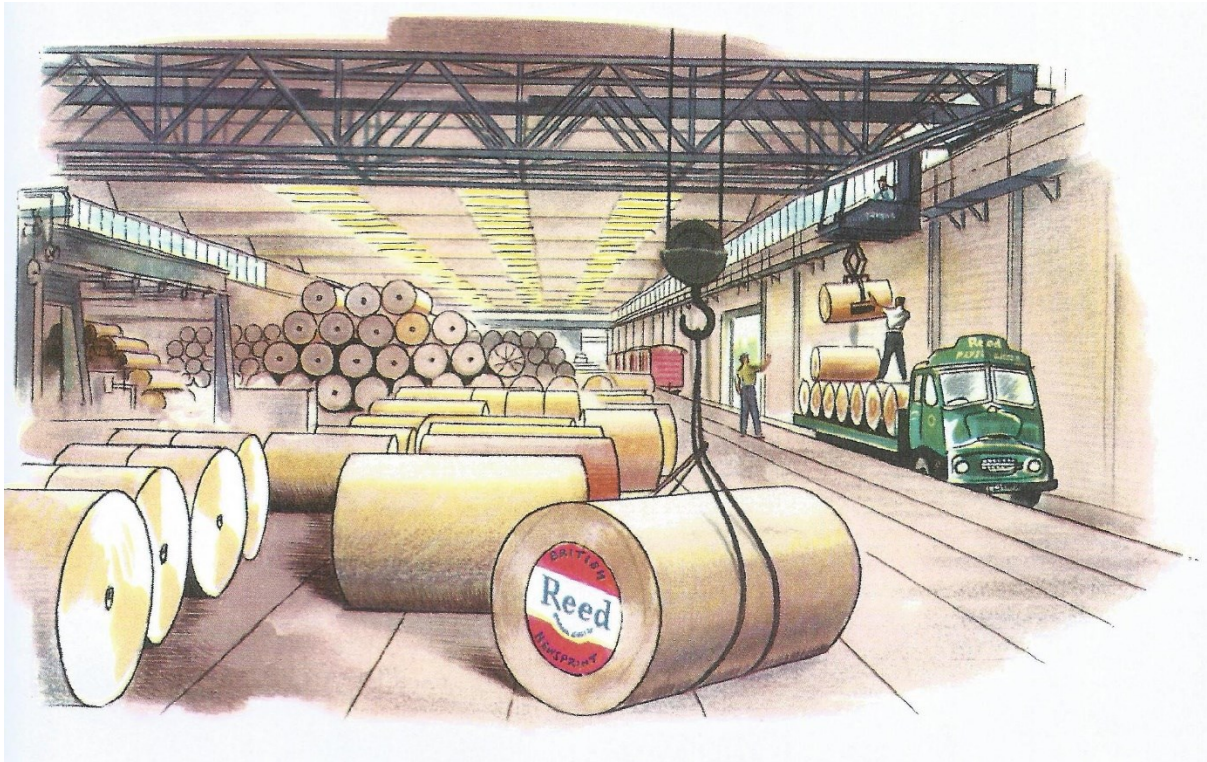
With this powerful concentration of manufacturing capacity, Aylesford is one of the world's largest production units of papers covering the whole field from newsprint and mechanical printings to unglazed and machine glazed wrapping papers and tissues. Included in the range are wallpaper base, glazed imitation parchment and an exceptionally wide range of speciality kraft and sulphite wrapping papers, impregnating papers, tissues, envelope manilla and cellulose wadding.



Sheets of paper produced at Aylesford are inspected in the new salle. The girls also count the sheets in reams

The start-up of No. 4 machine in 1929 was of great significance to the whole paper industry, the machine being capable of producing kraft paper at hitherto unattainable speeds and widths. That machine and most of the machines installed since are employed in producing wrapping and packaging papers including the wide variety of papers required by the Group's conversion factories.

One of the chief products of No. 4 machine was sack kraft, a grade of pure kraft paper suitable for the manufacture of multi-wall sacks. The company had foreseen great potentialities for this type of container and in the same year another concern erected a factory on the Aylesford site for the production of multi-wall sacks from sack kraft made on the new machine. This other concern was Colthrop Board & Paper Mills of Thatcham, a company which in 1956 became a member of the Reed Paper Group.



West Mill paper store and loading dock

In 1933, this sack factory was acquired by Albert E. Reed & Company, Limited and a subsidiary, Medway Paper Sacks Limited, formed to operate it. This was a major step forward in the campaign to diversify production in the packaging field and the story of this company has been one of outstanding success. The factory, now many times enlarged in size and production capacity, and equipped on the most modern lines, has always been the leading producer of paper sacks in Britain.

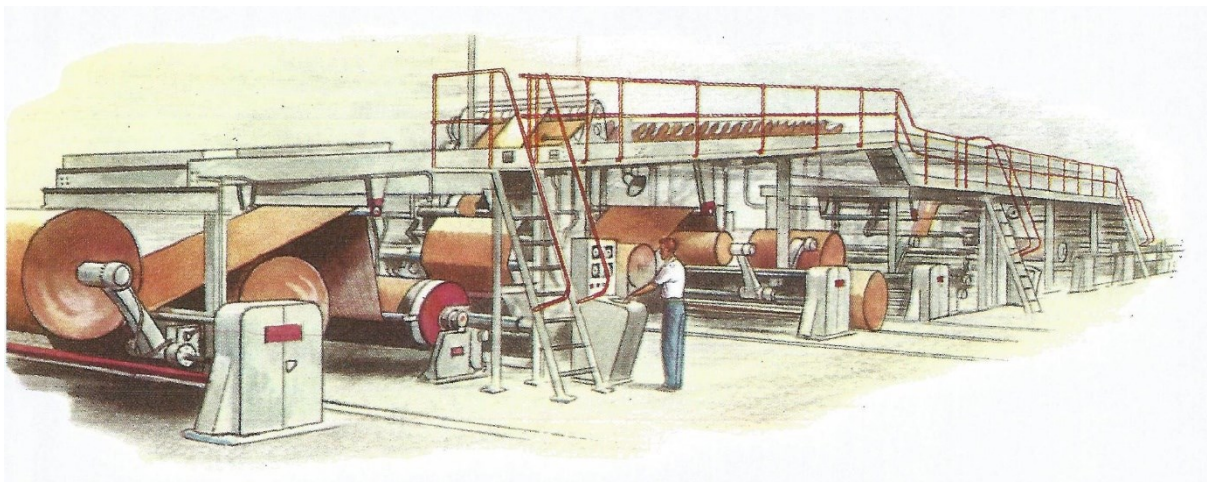
This position has been won and held by the company's enterprise in introducing continual improvements in sack design and material makeup and in methods of filling and sealing. Some two years before the outbreak of war, the company initiated in this country the use of specialised high speed equipment for the automatic filling and sealing of open-mouth sacks. It now maintains a separate department at Aylesford — the Packaging Machinery Department — to advise customers on sack-filling and sealing methods and to design and supply suitable machinery.

Some idea of this company's growth can be gained from the fact that the number of sacks now produced in one week is between three and four times greater than that produced in an entire year during the factory's early stages. In the process, a great many new applications have been developed. Originally, multi-wall sacks were used almost exclusively for carrying cement, lime, plaster, etc. Today, while the quantities carried have greatly

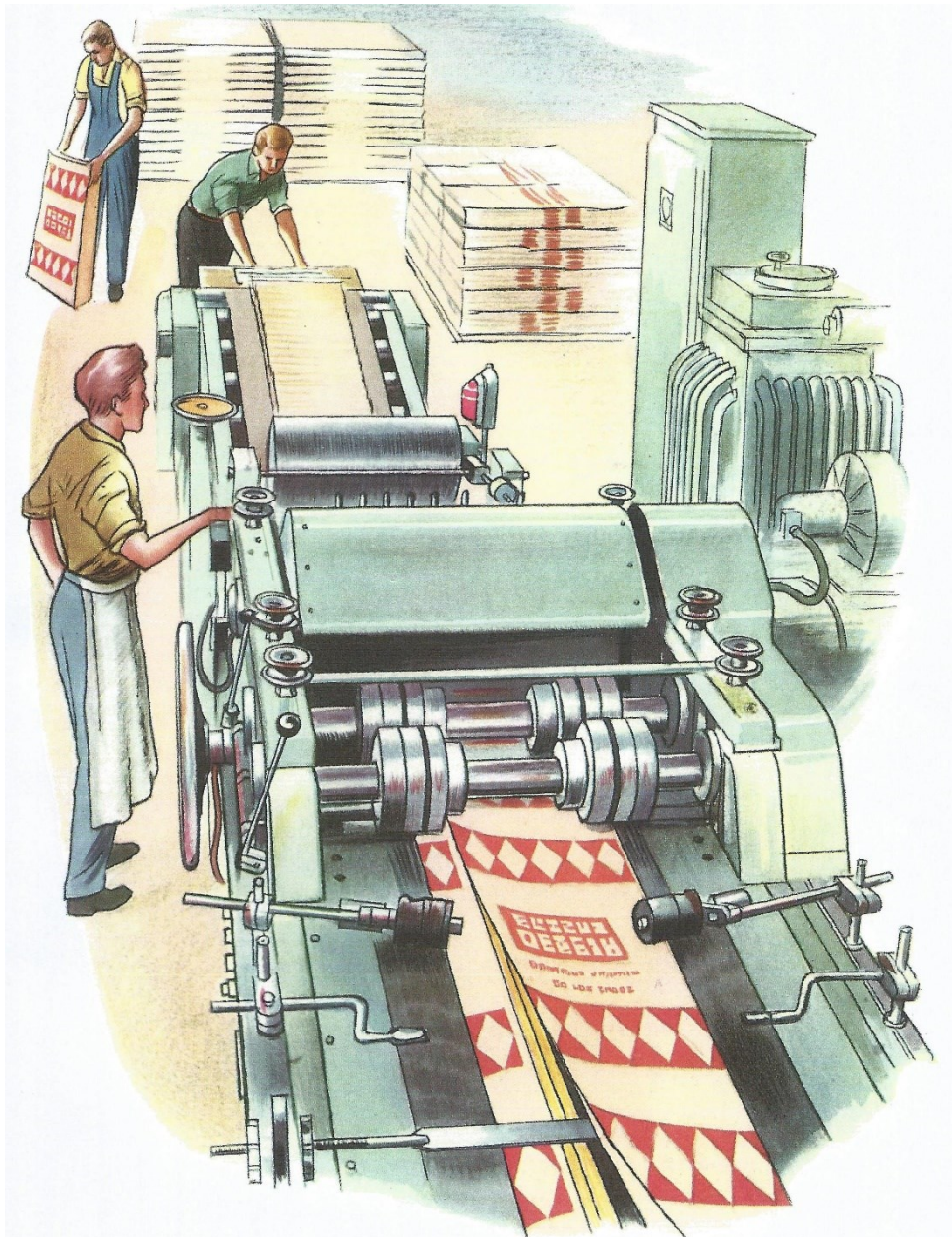
increased, these materials account for a relatively small percentage of Medway sacks sold, of which the use has been extended to animal feedstuffs, chemicals, fertilisers and many other products.

Shortly after the sack factory was built and still in the early formative years of the site, another subsidiary, The Medway Corrugated Paper Company Limited, established a factory to cater for what was accurately foreseen as a big future demand in industry for corrugated fibreboard cases. Corrugated sheets and rolls were already being manufactured by Medway Corrugated at Tovil, using strawpaper produced in the Reed mill there.

This was another significant milestone in the Group's progress. As with sacks, the Group has become Britain's leading producer of a lightweight yet tough and highly versatile packaging product which has enormously increased in industrial and commercial application.



The Langston-Masson corrugated board machine at Reed Corrugated Cases Limited, New Hythe, is the most up-to-date of its kind in the country



One of many 'tubing' machines at Medway Paper Sacks Limited. The machine forms the piles of paper into a tube which it cuts into sack lengths

The Medway Corrugated Paper Company Limited was, in 1954, merged with the newly acquired Thompson & Norris Manufacturing Company Limited, a company operating five factories throughout the British Isles.

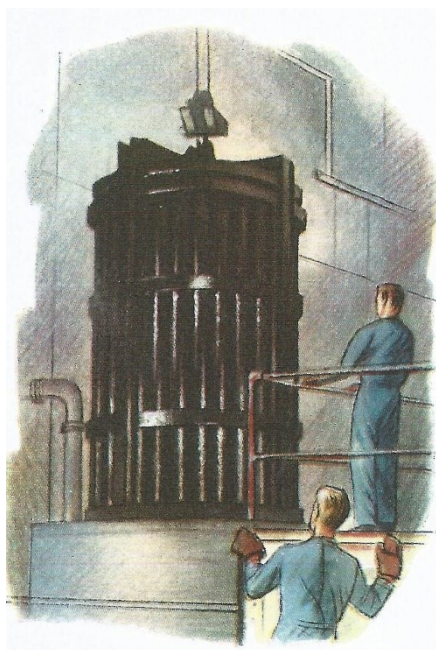
The case factory at Aylesford, though now only one of a national network, remains one of the largest of its kind in the world with a comparably wide range of production. Recently equipped with a new high speed corrugating machine incorporating the most up-to-date features of automatic control, the plant is turning out many hundreds of tons of cases weekly.

The case manufacturing company, now known as Reed Corrugated Cases Limited, also operates a factory at Aylesford for the manufacture of tube products, such as centre cores for paper reels.

Diversity of production at Aylesford is further illustrated by Brookgate Industries Limited. Originally a small ancillary unit carrying out experimental work for the Aylesford mills, it was formed into a subsidiary company under its present title in 1939, when development work on the packaging side was proceeding at a great pace. Brookgate Industries Limited occupies an intermediate position between paper production and conversion. It is, essentially, a secondary processing plant. It has the facilities and equipment (almost all of which it has designed and, in some cases, built for itself) to carry out many types of paper processing, including creping, laminating, Waxing, coating, bitumenising and resin-impregnating — either for further conversion in Group factories or for supply to other converters. In addition, it still continues its original function as an experimental process unit and was responsible for development Work on creping kraft paper and lamination of kraft paper with bitumen to form a moisture barrier.

A major Brookgate activity today is the manufacture of 'Aerocote', a very high-quality glazed printing paper.

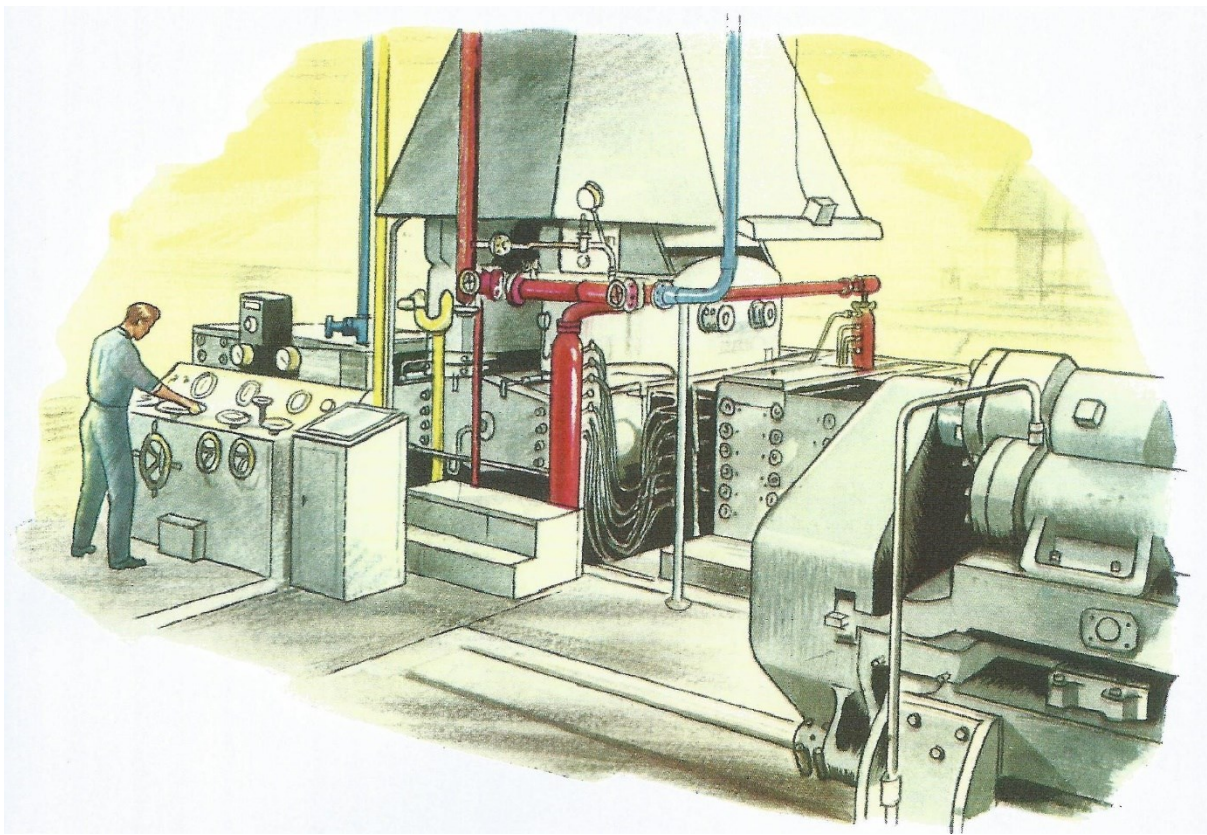
Another important activity at Brookgate is the manufacture of pitch impregnated fibre pipes, thus illustrating the potential variety of products which can be made from Wood fibres. They are used for building and agricultural drainage and under-floor service ducting, and are marketed by another Group company, The Key Engineering Company Limited.



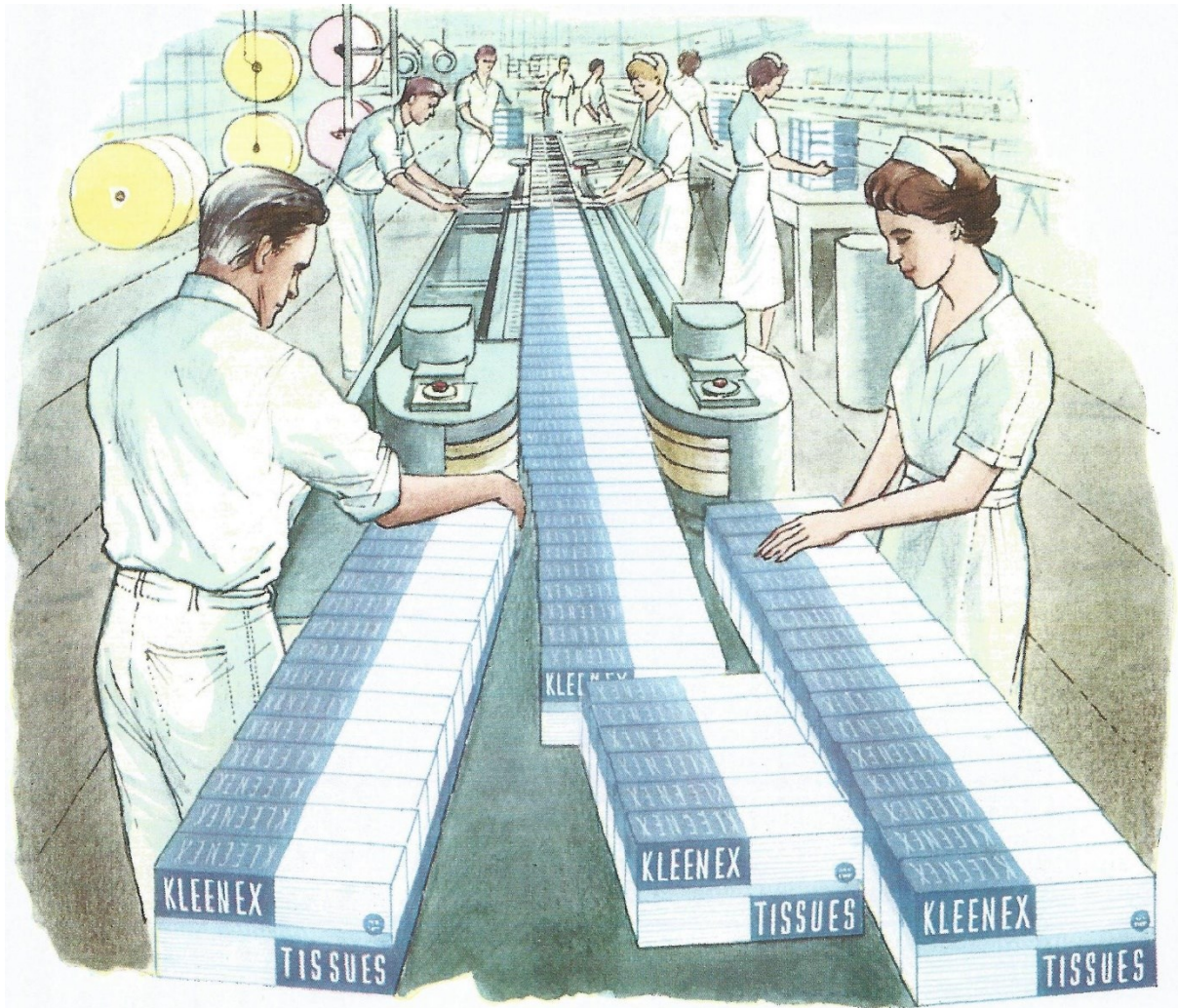
A batch of pitch fibre pipes at Brookgate Industries Limited being lifted from the vacuum tank after impregnation

Brookgate was the first manufacturer of this product in Britain. Pitch fibre piping, mainly formed from wastepaper pulp impregnated With pitch and machine tapered at section ends for jointing, has several advantages over conventional stoneware pipe — in speed of laying and jointing, ease of handling and greater resilience.

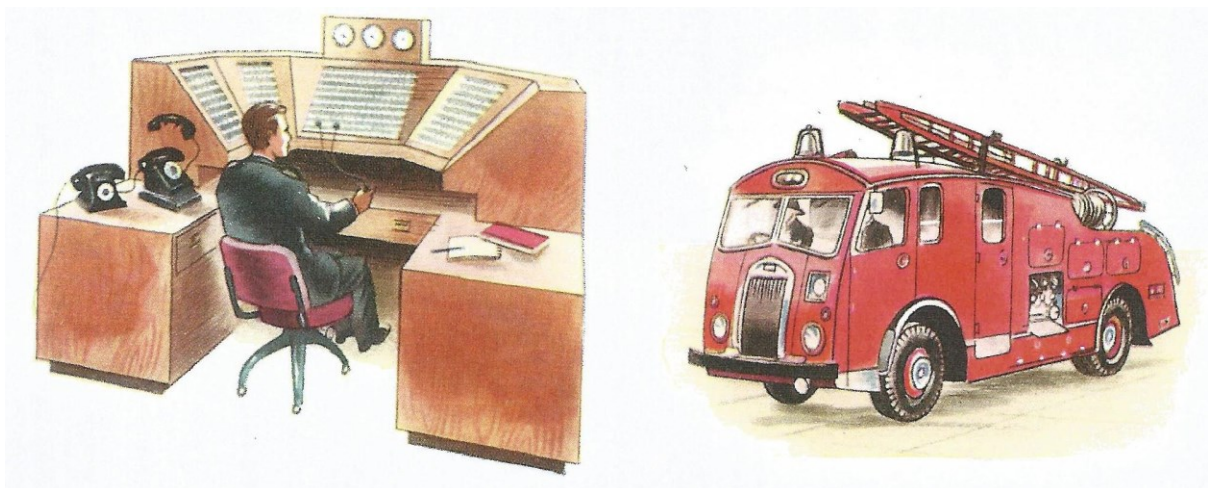
Another Reed Group company on the site is Holoplast Limited, whose factory is engaged on the production of laminated plastics in the form of hollow cavity panels and sheeting for structural or decorative purposes, corrugated roofing and shipdeck awning material, and compartmental ducting for telephone and other services in office walls.



Holoplast panels for walls and Decorplast laminated plastic sheets are formed in this press which subjects the resin-impregnated paper to tremendous heat and pressure.



Boxes of Kleenex coming off one of the production lines at Kimberly-Clark Limited.



On a site as large as Aylesford, a first-class fire-fighting service is essential. The detection and warning system is possibly the most comprehensive in private use in Britain.

This latter combines very naturally with the under-floor service ducting marketed by Key Engineering. The base papers for the laminated plastics

products are impregnated with resin by Brookgate Industries before undergoing final conversion in the giant presses of the Holoplast factory.

Some years ago, the Group joined forces with the Kimberly-Clark Corporation of America in establishing a British manufacturing company for Kleenex and other world-famous cellulose wadding products, and a modern integrated wadding mill and conversion plant has been built on the site, taking advantage of Aylesford's supplies of process steam, power and water and the site services such as roads, railways, fire and security protection. The high-speed wadding machine started up in April 1957 and is soon to be supplemented by a second faster machine.

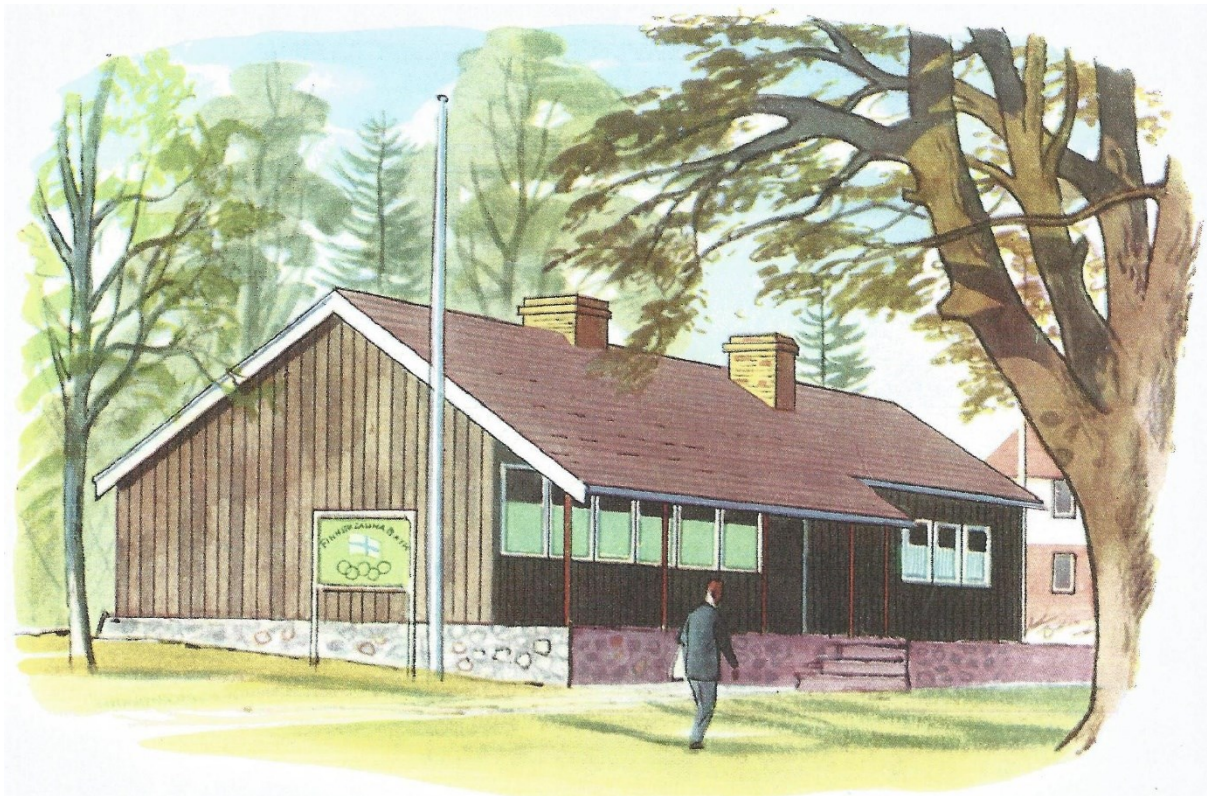
The keynote of Aylesford activities is the local autonomy enjoyed by the managers of all these diverse operations. As with companies elsewhere in the Group, each manager has full responsibility for his own organisation. Of course, close co-operation and liaison between Aylesford units must be maintained — and the sharing of a common site helps this — but the necessary getting together is done with the minimum of formality and procedural red-tape.

At the same time, companies have the benefit of communal site services, which for an industrial estate of Aylesford's size and complexity need to be organised on a huge scale. Enough power, for instance, is used at Aylesford to supply a town the size of Brighton, with its quarter of a million inhabitants, and the two Aylesford power stations consume up to 7,000 tons of coal a Week. Over twenty-five million gallons of water are used each day and are drawn from boreholes, a stream and the River Medway. There are vast receiving and handling facilities for the thousands of tons weekly of incoming materials and for the despatch of equally large tonnages of finished goods including those for export.

Night and day, a site fire brigade is on watch, furnished with the best modern equipment and manned by highly trained, full-time personnel, whose record in national and local competitions has been exceptionally good. Its site-wide detection and warning system and central control set-up is possibly the most comprehensive private system in the country. A similarly well-trained and efficient security force maintains a twenty-four hour Vigilance over the whole area.

There is a strong community spirit prevailing throughout the whole site which is fostered by management in many ways.

The sports grounds of Cobdown and Larklands have unusually good facilities for almost every type of sport and recreation, organised by self-governing clubs and societies. The site is excellently served with canteens providing a day and night service.



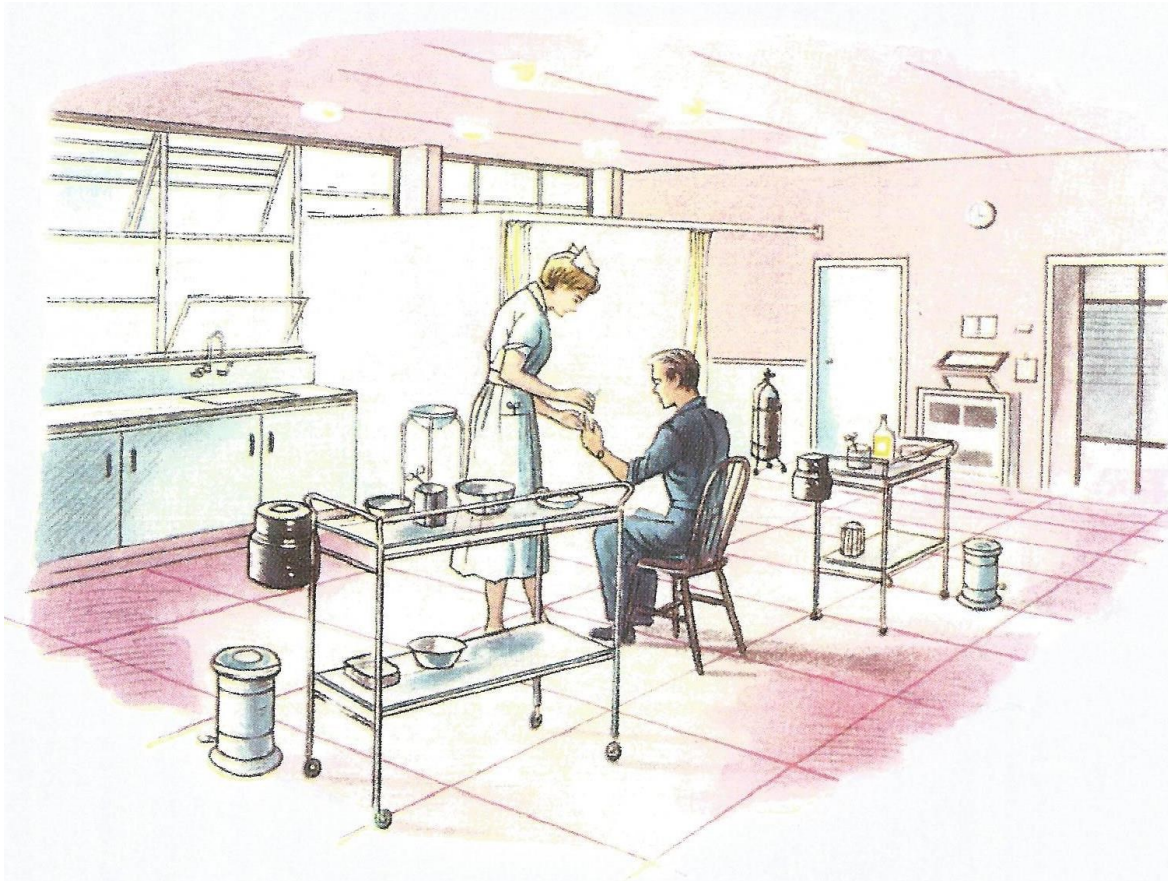
The Sauna bath brought to Britain by the Finnish competitors in the 1948 Olympic Games was afterwards presented to the Group. It is now in a parkland setting at Cobdown, where it is in regular use by members of the sports club.



Above: Once used for drying hops, these oast houses on the Cobdown estate have been converted into a clubhouse for employees

Below: Cobdown House, on the Cobdown estate, which is now used as a hostel for employees





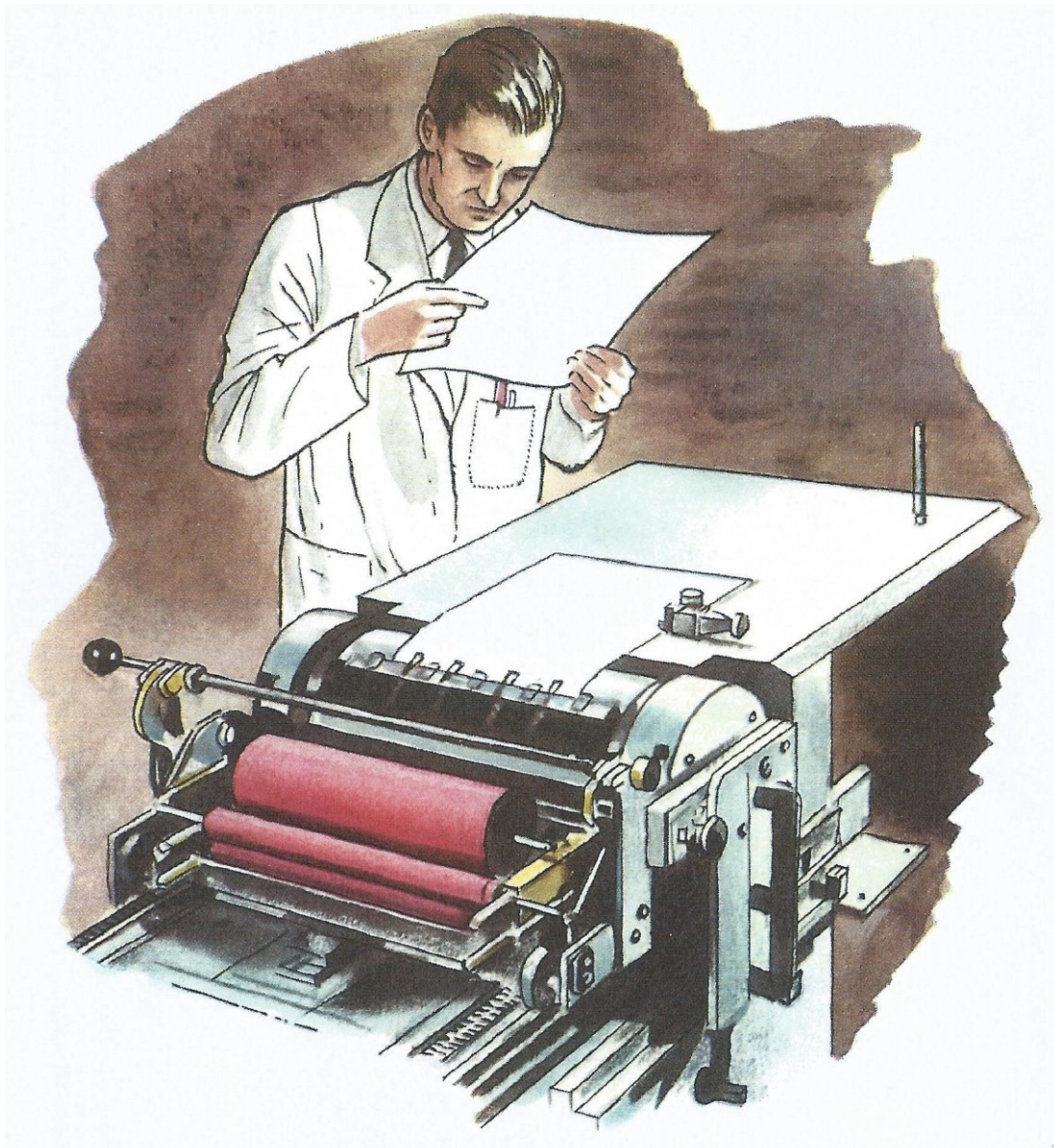
The staff at the modern and well-equipped medical centre not only treat casualties, but also give injections, re-dressings and various other treatments when requested by the employee's family doctor.

The site has its own medical centre providing extensive, up-to-date service and maintains its own ambulances to convey casualties and hospital outpatients. It is also the headquarters of the senior medical officer who is responsible for the organisation and administration of medical services throughout the Reed Group. Over and above the provision of medical services as such, this officer and his staff perform an important advisory function — in assisting in placing employees in jobs to which they are physically and mentally best suited, and advising on suitable conditions and standards for working premises ~ thus bringing modern medical practice into place as a positive aid to management.

Education and training is recognised in the Group as a matter of utmost importance. The Aylesford site, by its size and compact nature, has made possible the development of a comprehensive scheme and it has become a major item of policy that young men and Women drawn from a Widely scattered and partly rural area who enter the company's employ should find full and continuing facilities for enlarging their minds and extending their skills to fit them for a satisfactory career.

Vocational aspects are covered by training in papermaking, engineering and the building trades and for young technicians mainly on a 'day release' basis in collaboration with appropriate technical colleges. In addition, Aylesford is unique in the South in that it has combined with the Kent Education Authority in founding and running a works school on County College lines. Again on a 'day release' basis all young people up to seventeen years of age receive further general and non-vocational education for at least their first year of employment. An option to continue until eighteen years is taken up by the majority. It is firmly believed that this scheme has helped many to continue their education, to take seriously their vocational training and to broaden their interests, all of which help to create a 'sense of belonging' so essential to the young people.

A number of other Group services are at Aylesford. Here are Research and Development laboratories where qualified scientists and technicians are testing, analysing and evaluating raw materials, processes, and finished products or Working on longer-term developments. Some of the staff, perhaps, may be investigating an operational problem in a mill or factory in collaboration with the unit's own technical staff — some may even be working in the plants of a customer. The laboratories are not simply 'back-room' departments but also provide a practical consultant service as do Work Study and Economic Research, and all are sub-divisions of the main research and development function in the Group, which is concentrated for the most part at Aylesford.



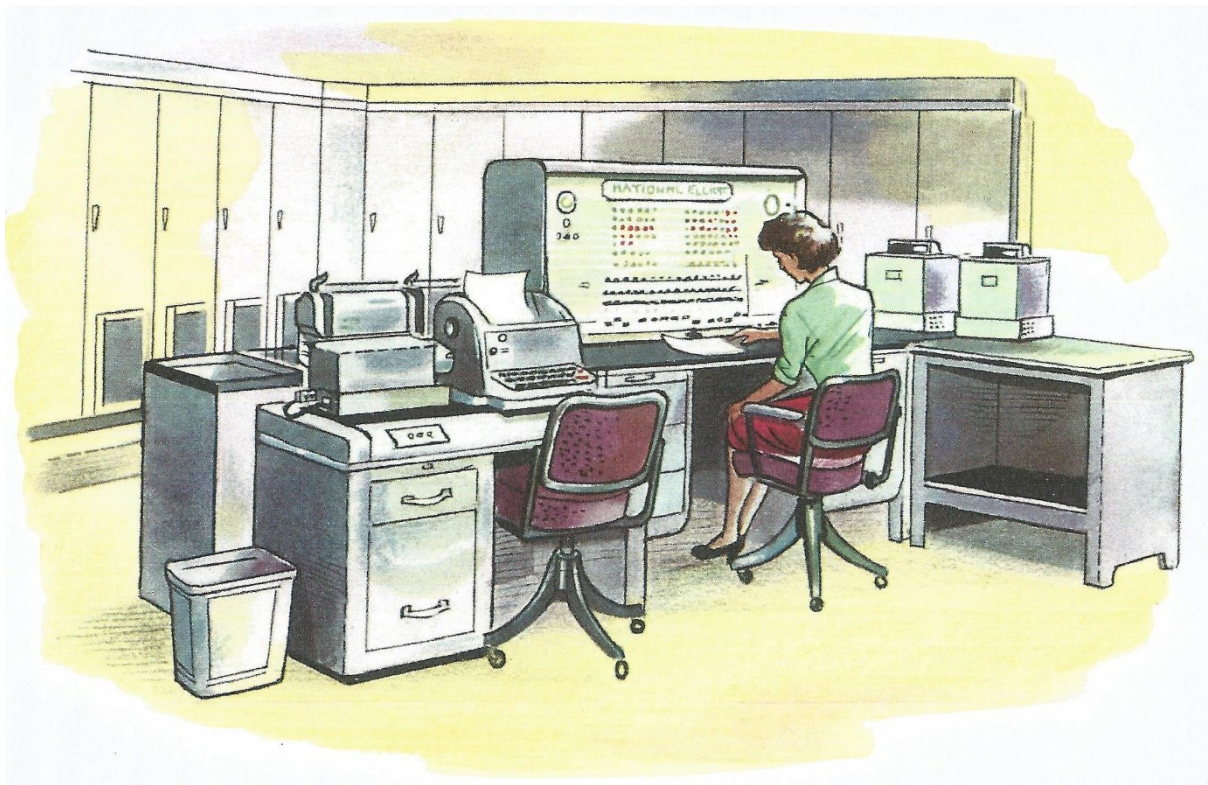
The printing properties of papers are constantly improved by research carried out in the Research and Development Laboratories at Aylesford

Group Engineering, another department of the Research and Development Division, has its headquarters on the site. This department serves all mills and factories in a consultant capacity, designing complete paper machine installations and converting factories, supervising construction, designing or modifying specialised pieces of equipment, and helping mill and company engineers with unusually complex problems on their own locations.

The Engineering Department occupies part of the new Group Office Building. Other Group services located here are the Personnel Division, Pensions Department and the Group Management Accounting Service which is a Group advisory service staffed by specialists, important aspects of whose

work is the provision of data processing facilities and organisation and methods service.

With installation a few years ago of a punched-card system, operations such as payroll computation, stores control and cost analyses were able to be done centrally, economically and with a high degree of uniformity for many companies, including some located elsewhere in the Group. Recently, a National / Elliott 405 electronic digital computer has been installed on the site. Few such installations exist in industry at the present time, and their full potentialities are still being developed. The scope of the Aylesford computer will not be limited to accountancy work but will extend to the solving of many production, sales and technical problems.



The National/Elliott 405 electronic digital computer

Another central service operated from Aylesford is road transport.

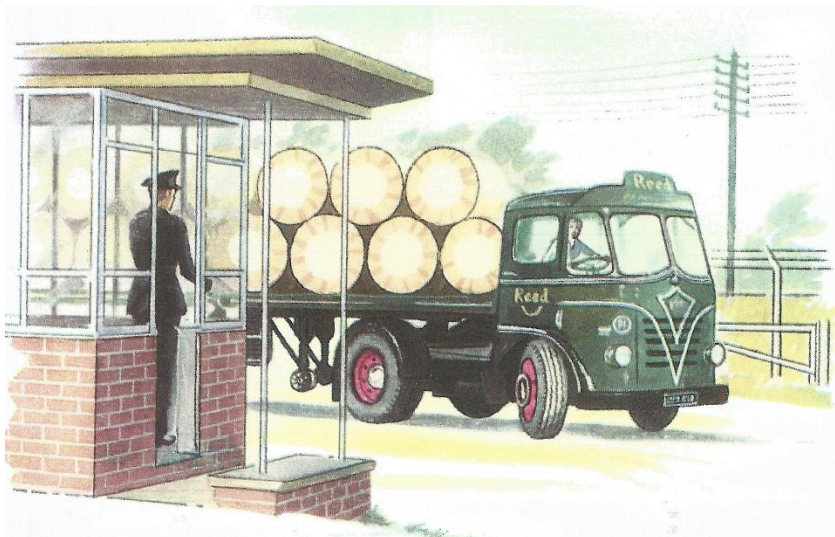
The advantages of a Group transport service are manifold. Regularity of deliveries (vital where printing papers are concerned and of great competitive significance for all products today) can be ensured; routes and loads can be economically and efficiently planned; full control of vehicles, their appearance, loading and operational standards, can be maintained; and administration is greatly simplified.

The new transport maintenance depot on the site, opened in 1957, provides complete plant and facilities for the regular servicing and major overhauling of a large fleet of commercial vehicles covering well over 10,000 miles a day throughout Great Britain. A unique feature is its five-bay service dock, where fully laden vehicles each weighing up to thirty tons can drive on to steel tracks over a fully equipped inspection pit for rapid servicing and repairs.



Reed Transport Limited's vehicles are maintained in a modern depot at Aylesford. This service dock was the first of its kind constructed for loaded vehicles weighing up to thirty tons

Thus it will be seen that Group and company activities are closely integrated at Aylesford and this highly organised industrial community symbolises the Reed Group in action - its diversity of enterprise and its singleness of purpose.



A load being checked by a member of the Security Department as it leaves Aylesford