

WASC 2165

Presentation

Book to

Mr P. G. Knapman

1943



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Presentation Book to Mr P G Knapman, MBE. Signed by management of sections on his departure from RGPF 1943, with group photo fully identified (WAI 39, WASC 106) and a short history of the RGPF. Hand written

WASC 2165

TITLE

PRESENTATION BOOK

TO MR. P.G. KNAPMAN

MBE  
SIGNED BY MANAGEMENT OF SECTIONS  
ON HIS DEPARTURE

FROM RGPF 1943

WITH GROUP PHOTO

FULLY IDENTIFIED

[ WAI 39 ] WASC 106

AND A SHORT HISTORY  
OF THE RGPF, HAND  
WRITTEN.

1943

This disc contains JPEG digitised photographs in diferent resolutions of:

1) A hand lettered book made for Percival George Knapman M.B.E., B.Sc., F.I.C. in 1943 when he ended his term as Superintendent of the Royal Gunpowder Factory.

These are in JPEGS\_1 & JPEGS\_2 directories (folders).

2) Four pictures of "The Chepstow Garrison" re-enacting (on Sunday 28th July 2002) the Civil War siege of Raglan Castle, using muskets and cannon. The considerable amount of smoke generated by black (gun)powder is clearly seen, in addition to the need to clean the cannon bore after each black powder discharge.

3) Launching a 'rocket' at the Royal Gunpowder Mills, July 2002.

These are in ROCKET directory

The inside front cover had a group photo (JPEGS\_1\photo size\staffpic.JPG) of the staff in 1943(?), with an index opposite (people43.gif) to those in the photograph on the first page.

The dedication followed, all following pages being written or drawn only on the right hand pages.

James Knapman Orr, 30th July 2002.



Royal Gunpowder Factory.

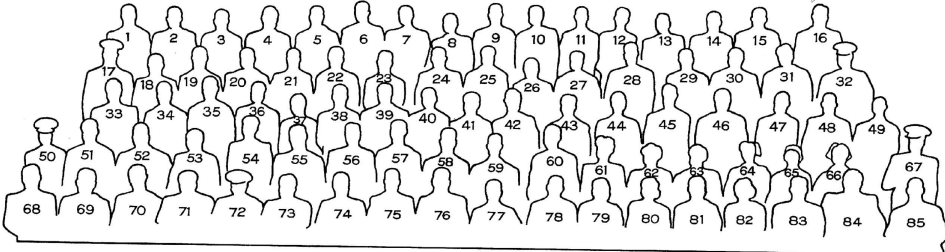


## Back Row. (Left to Right)

- |                  |                   |                    |                       |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. J. H. Keith   | 5. F. W. Carter   | 9. G. R. Smith     | 13. J. Kirkham        |
| 2. J. W. Parrish | 6. J. C. Gladwell | 10. P. W. Smith    | 14. A. E. Burbridge   |
| 3. W. K. Ward    | 7. H. R. Wiseman  | 11. C. A. A. Hitch | 15. C. Chettleborough |
| 4. C. F. Speller | 8. J. D. Coleman  | 12. J. W. Johnson  | 16. J. J. Chilton     |

## 4th Row.

- |                   |                |                 |                      |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 17. P. Pele       | 21. L. Halls   | 25. W. Perry    | 29. A. S. Berry      |
| 18. A. C. Cordell | 22. G. Rudge   | 26. W. Emblen   | 30. C. Galsgrove     |
| 19. J. Ward       | 23. E. Spencer | 27. L. Pacey    | 31. A. Campden       |
| 20. L. Macking    | 24. E. Monk    | 28. C. T. Shore | 32. J. T. Wellington |



## 3rd Row.

- |                  |                    |                 |                  |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 33. J. Tucky     | 37. L. A. Prescott | 41. G. Davies   | 45. B. Scott     |
| 34. A. Clary     | 38. R. A. Rees     | 42. E. Upton    | 46. A. L. Wilson |
| 35. C. W. Butler | 39. B. J. Hayward  | 43. J. W. Laver | 47. C. Mackinnon |
| 36. G. L. Butler | 40. J. H. Weeks    | 44. A. Edge     | 48. J. A. Emblen |
|                  |                    |                 | 49. F. Mills     |

## 2nd Row.

- |                  |                     |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 50. J. Selwyn    | 54. J. C. Hague     | 58. L. H. Gerby  | 62. M. Wilcher      |
| 51. B. A. Hunt   | 55. R. C. Hindhaugh | 59. J. Watson    | 63. M. Miller       |
| 52. H. T. Lester | 56. H. C. Walton    | 60. R. Edmondson | 64. G. Morgan       |
| 53. C. Wilson    | 57. R. A. Wallace   | 61. C. Tollervey | 65. J. F. Sainley   |
|                  |                     | 62. C. Whiffing  | 67. W. H. Mansfield |

## Front Row.

- |                    |                       |                       |                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 68. H. G. Suckling | 72. Capt. Lindsay Mee | 76. R. H. Mc Lintic   | 81. J. K. Reeves  |
| 69. R. C. Dunn     | 73. H. J. Connor      | 77. P. G. Knappman    | 82. D. Langan     |
| 70. J. Houghton    | 74. J. D. Stephen     | 78. R. N. Stutchbury  | 83. J. W. Green   |
| 71. L. Nichols     | 75. R. J. Smith       | 79. G. Bennett-Towell | 84. A. J. Leonard |
|                    |                       | 80. J. T. Baring      | 85. W. Bedington  |



**T**o **Perry G. Knapman, Esq.,**  
**M.B.E., B.Sc., F.I.C.**

**W**e, your friends and colleagues on the Staff of the **Royal Gunpowder Factory** desire to tender this expression of goodwill and affectionate regards.

**W**e offer our sincere congratulations on your good work in the service of the Royal Gunpowder Factory from the date of your appointment in 1912, and especially as our **Superintendent**.

**T**he Staff have been ever mindful of the keen interest which you have always displayed in the welfare of the Factory, an interest which has done so much to inculcate esprit de corps, and has won for you lasting friendship and appreciation.

**W**e wish to acknowledge warmly the courtesy, kindness and personal interest that we have received from you at all times and trust that you may be spared for many years in the service of the Crown.

Waltham Abbey 1943.

## A Short History of the R.G.P.F.

### Waltham Abbey.

Mills seem to have flourished at Waltham for a considerable period for we see that at the Survey made in the Conqueror's reign in a comparison between the state of Waltham then and in Edward the Confessor's reign "then one mill, now three, and five fisheries." —

The earliest known record relating to the Waltham Abbey Powder Mills is dated 1560. It is of interest as showing that, even thus early, the factory was of considerable extent and was engaged in producing gunpowder for the English Government. On the date named, one Maria Antonio di Rizzo, an Italian, writes to John Thomeverth at Waltham Abbey, in reference to a tender he had made to supply the Government with materials for making powder. Thomeverth was the executor of the widow of Anthony Denny who had died in 1549, and was probably the owner or manager of the Powder Mill. From that day at any rate and doubtless earlier the manufacture of gunpowder on a large scale had been carried on continuously at Waltham Abbey.

Farmer in his *History of Waltham* gives a view of the factory as it was in 1785. From this view it appears that there were then some twenty buildings. Of the factory Farmer says:—

"Near the Feen, on one of these Rivers (i.e. on one of the branches of the Lea) are curious Gunpowder Mills, which supply the nation with great quantities of Gunpowder being esteemed the largest and completest Works in Great Britain and are now the Property of Mr. John Walton, a gentleman of known honour and integrity."

This John Walton was a relative of Isaac Walton the angler.

In 1787 the factory was acquired by the Government from another member of the family, a later John Walton. From that time to the present it has always been known as the Royal Gunpowder Factory. The surrounding lands were purchased in 1795. Upon becoming Crown property the factory was enlarged by the Board of Ordnance under whose management it fell.

At various times between 1803 and 1855 the Board of Ordnance purchased land and buildings adjacent to the factory both in the town of Waltham Abbey and along the banks of the Lea to the North of the Factory, acquiring altogether about 140 acres. They purchased also the whole right of water of the River Lea and all its branches, from King's Weir in Nazeing, to the Black Ditch in Sewardstone, a length of five miles.

In 1855 the factory was capable of producing 10,000 barrels of gunpowder and of storing 5,000 tons of saltpetre and sulphur.

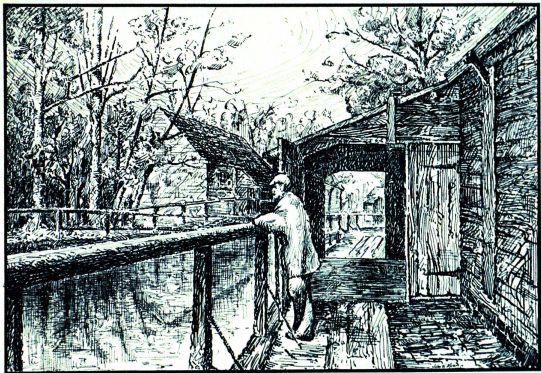
In 1872 the production of gun-cotton was commenced on a manufacturing scale at Waltham

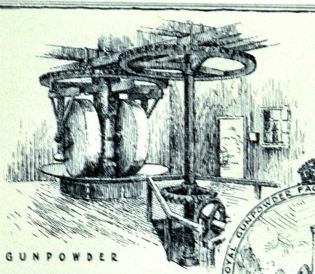


Abby. The original gunpowder Factory consisted mainly of old buildings which had formed a part of the saltpetre refinery and which abutted on the principal street of the town. It was capable of turning out about 250 tons of gunpowder a year. In 1885, 100 acres of land, known as Dinton Hill were purchased by the Government and a new Gunpowder Factory was erected there which started work in 1890.

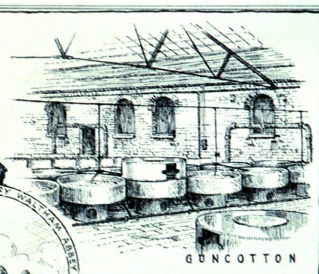
In 1896, Sir Frederick Abel's Explosives Committee recommended a smokeless powder for the British Service to which the name of "Cordite" was given. The details of its manufacture were worked out in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and its production was commenced at Waltham Abbey in 1897. A Nitroglycerine Factory was put up on Dinton Hill where the necessary buildings for making cordite were also erected. Later, to meet the increased demands for cordite, owing to its having taken the place of gunpowder for propulsive purposes, a second nitroglycerine factory was built in the old portion of the factory and this started work in 1898. At the same time, the majority of the houses formerly used for the manufacture of gunpowder were converted into houses for the manufacture of cordite, the original cordite buildings being no longer suitable for the larger output required.

In 1914-15 a considerable expansion of the factory took place to meet the needs of the Great War for Cannon cordite. Between the years 1914 to 1939, several pilot plants for the manufacture of High Explosives were erected and used as the basis for design of factories in other parts of the Country. The manufacture of explosives containing charcoal ceased in 1915.

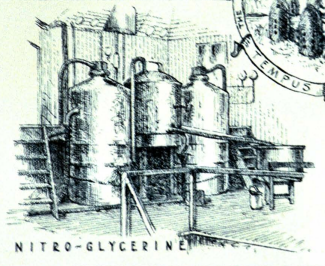




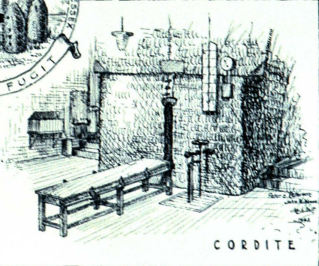
GUNPOWDER



GUNCOTTON



NITRO-GLYCERINE



CORDITE



## Management 1943.

*J. Knapman*  
Superintendent.

*R. H. Mc Lintock*  
Managing Chemist I.

*R. J. Smith*  
Managing Chemist II.

*A. S. Sturges*  
Principal Clerk.

*F. C. Bennett-Pond*  
Chief Engineer.

*S. P. Baring*  
Labour Manager.

# Production Staff.

Guncotton and R.D.C. Sections.

*H. Suckling*

Chemist in Charge.

*A. Swain*

Chemist Guncotton.

David Davies

Shift Chemist.

Y. H. Mobb.

Shift Chemist.

E. Monk

Senior Foreman.

*Ward*

Foreman.

*Walls*

Foreman.

*L. H. Garty*

Chemist R.D.C.

*J. Roberts*

Shift Chemist.

*L. Stoking*

Foreman.

## Nitroglycerine and Tetryl Sections.

R. L. Dunn

Chemist in Charge (N/G.)

J. V. Houghton

Chemist in Charge (Tetryl)

R. A. Wallace

Chemist.

~~J. B. Butler~~

Shift Chemist.

C. D. Butler

Shift Chemist.

D. A. Prescott

Shift Chemist.

L. Spencer

Foreman (Nitroglycerine)

J. W. Larish

Foreman (Acids)

G. Rudge

Foreman (Tetryl)



Cordite Section.

L. Nichol

Chemist in Charge.

T. Tushy.

J. V. Westwood

Chemist (Upper Works)

R. A. Rees

B. J. Hayward

Shift Chemist (Upper Works) Shift Chemist (Upper Works) Shift Chemist (Upper Works)

J. B. Litch

W. Feary

Shop Manager.

P. W. Carter

G. J. Appellar

Foreman (Upper Works)

Foreman (Upper Works)

Foreman (Upper Works)

R. B. Hindle

Chemist (Lower Works)

W. Kilread

Chemist (Lower Works)

A. C. Cordell

Foreman (Lower Works)

W. R. J. Dault

Foreman (Lower Works)

L. A. Izeng

Chemist (Lower Works)

J. C. Gladwell

Foreman (Lower Works)

District Control.

H. J. Lester.  
Chemist in Charge.

B. A. Kent.  
Chemist in Charge.

Chemical Laboratory.

F. E. Hague.  
Chemist.

A. Lavery  
Chemist

Alex Baynes

Asst. I.

C. K. Smith  
Asst. II.

P. W. Smith  
Asst. II.

E. A. Aitch  
Asst. II.

Chemical Inspection.

G. S. Swan.  
Chemist, C. S. I. D.

J. A. Keith  
Overlooker, C. S. A.

# Engineering and Ancillary Staff.

## Building Works Dept.

~~Eric Roberts~~

Manager Buildings.

R. Hapton

Clerk of Works.

B. V. Shore.

Foreman (Upper Works)

A. S. Berry.

Foreman (Lower Works)

## Machinery Section.

R. Edmondson.

Asst. Manager Services.

J. W. Laver.

S.M. (Upper Works)

B. M. & Light

S.M. (Electrical)

Hodge.

S.M. (Lower Works)

A. L. Wilson.

S.M. (Fuel)

A. B. Barker

Foreman (Upper Works)

W. Embleton

Foreman (Electrical)

Lio Gulen

Foreman (Lower Works)



## Chemical Plumbers Section.

Peter Tracy  
Foreman in Charge

Lt. Pease.  
Foreman.

## Ancillary Services.

Childs.  
Safety Officer.

W. Bedington.  
Security Officer.

James Watson.  
Technical Records Officer.

## Air Raid Precautions.

C. C. Healeborough.  
A. N. P. O.

A. Monard  
Officer in Charge.

J. J. Chilton.  
A. N. P. O.

A. E. Burbridge.  
A. N. P. O.

W. C. Mansfield  
O/C. 56th Bn. Home Guard.

Medical.

*J. W. Jell.*  
Medical Officer.

*M. Miller*  
Hospital Sister.

*G. Morgan*  
Hospital Sister.

*J. Gandy*  
Hospital Sister.

Inspection of Dangerous Buildings.

*Elliott Blau.*  
Inspector.

War Department Constabulary.

*L. Selway*  
Chief Inspector.

*J. H. Wellington*  
Inspector.

*D. H. Poole*  
Fire Brigade Officer.

*Geo. North.*  
Canteen Manager.

## Clerical Staff.

W. D. Stephen.  
Senior Clerk.

F. Kenneth Peers.  
Cashier.

D. Duncan.  
Executive Officer.

A. Cameron.  
Principal Storeholder.

Henry Stewart.  
Executive Officer.

Charles H. H. H. H.  
D.C.O.S. (Confidential)

W. W. W.  
D.C.O.S. (A/c. & House)

J. A. Smith.  
D.C.O.S. (Wages)

E. MacKinnon.  
D.C.O.S. (Stores)

A. Beard.  
Senior Worktaker.

Godfrey.  
Cash Clerk.

H. R. Wiseman.  
War Savings Organizer.

J. Coleman.  
Storeholder.



Labour Department.

W. Johnson

Labour Officer.

J. Kirkham

Assistant Labour Officer.

C. Tolleray

Labour Officer.

M. G. Hobbs

Asst. Labour Officer.

E. Whitting

Asst. Labour Officer.

M. Wilcher

Asst. Labour Officer.

## Transfers and Retirements

From September 1939 to September 1943.

A.C. Bulbrough	To R.C.F. Ranskill	H. Lewis	To R.C.F. Bishopstons
R.L. Bickle	To C.S.A. R.D.	J.D. Parsons	To R.C.F. Wrocham
R.V. Blanchard	Retired 1942	J. Rankin	To Ministry of Supply No. 2
W.C. Blanchard	Retired 1942	A.J. Read	Retired 1943
L. Chard	To R.C.F. Bridgwater	L.P. Reach	To R.C.F. Bishopstons
G.I. Luven	To Ministry of Supply No. 2	A.H. Roberts	To R.C.F. Bishopstons
G.H. Frank	To R.C.F. Pembrey	V.C. Schaefer	To South Africa
G.I. Fullerton	To R.C.F. Ranskill	H. Sellick	To R.C.F. Wrocham
B.T. Griffiths	To R.C.F. Wrocham (P.D.)	D. Simmens	To R.C.F. Bridgwater
M.T. Kavanagh	To R.C.F. Ranskill	W.H. Simmens	To R.C.F. Bridgwater
W.B. Luven	To R.C.F. Enfield Lock	J.W.C. Thompson	To R.C.F. Bridgwater

# Succession of Officers of the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey.

1787—1805	Jas Wright	1875—1880	Col. R. J. Hay
1805—1818	W. S. Matthews	1880—1885	Col. C. B. Brauchenburg, R.A.
1818—1825	E. Middleton	1885—1892	Maj. Gen. W. H. Noble
1825—1831	G. Wilks	1892—1894	Lt. Col. W. McClintock, R.A.
1831—1832	Jas. Wright	1894—1900	Col. J. B. Ormsby
1832—1845	Lt. Col. C. L. Moody, C.R.E.	1900—1909	Bt. Col. Sir F. L. Nathan, R.A.
1845—1852	Capt. A. J. Tulloh, R.A.	1909—1914	Maj. F. T. Fisher, R.A.
1852—1854	Maj. C. C. Dickson, R.A.	1914—1934	Lt. Col. F. H. Evans, R.A.
1854—1868	Col. W. H. Ashworth, R.A.	1934—1939	R. C. Buxton, C.R.E. <small>Ph.D., M.Sc., F.R.C., M.S. (Chem.), F.R.S.</small>
1868—1875	Col. C. H. Youngblood, R.A.	1939	P. G. Knappman, M.Sc. <small>R.A., F.R.C.</small>
1875—1875	Lt. Col. Young, R.A.		







DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP  
REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

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