

# Bright Sparks

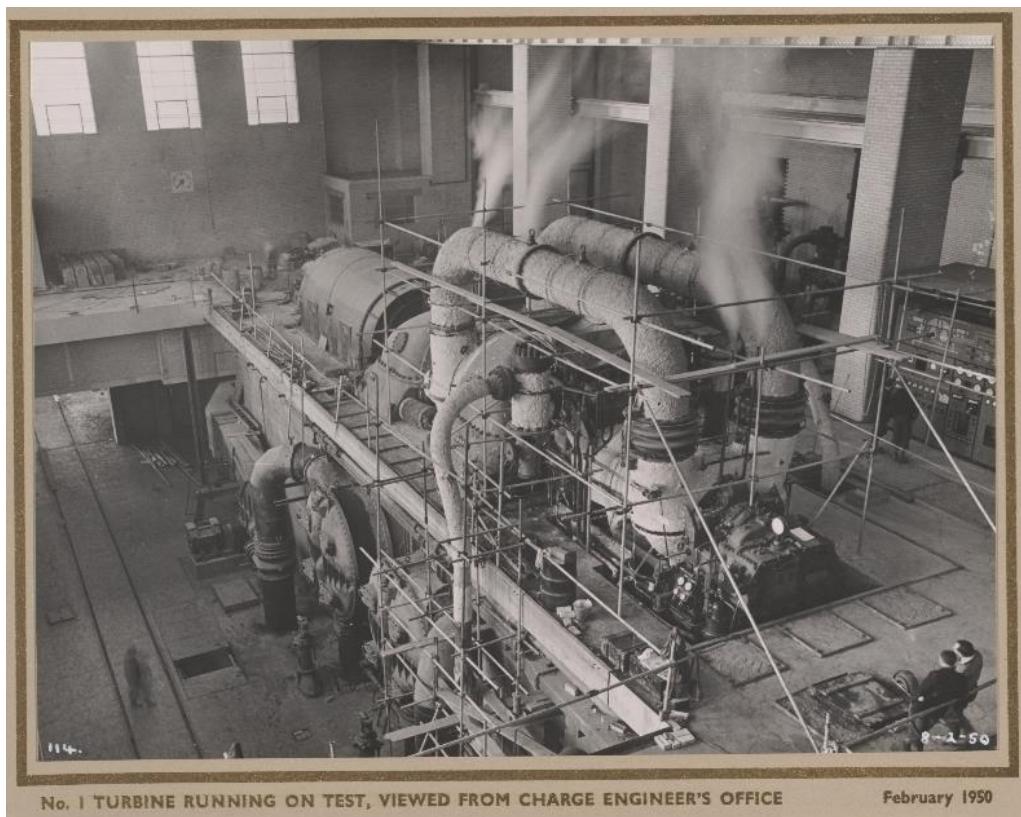
The first public electricity supply for both street lighting and domestic use was installed in Godalming, Surrey in 1881. The 'Electric Lighting Act 1882' allowed persons, companies or local authorities to set up electricity supply systems. Although the provision of electricity in Godalming was not altogether successful, the experience did not seem to deter people. Nottingham began to use electric street illuminations in the late nineteenth century (there had been gas street lighting for many years) and in 1901 the first electric trams started running.

By the nationalisation of Britain's electricity industry in 1948, there were over 600 electric power companies. Manuscripts & Special Collections holds the records of twelve pre-nationalisation power companies that were absorbed into the East Midlands Electricity Board upon nationalisation. The records date from 1887 but are, unfortunately, incomplete. The economic instability of the earliest electricity companies followed by the industry's nationalisation and privatisation means that record survival is fragmented. Nonetheless, they are extremely significant in charting the beginnings of something that today we take for granted and upon which our modern society is completely dependent.

Business archives held at the University of Nottingham include the local heritage of lace-making, hosiery and textiles, and there is an excellent collection of water and drainage related records. More information on all of our business collections, as well as resources explaining how to understand and use historical financial and business records can be found on the website of Manuscripts and Special Collections:  
[www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss).

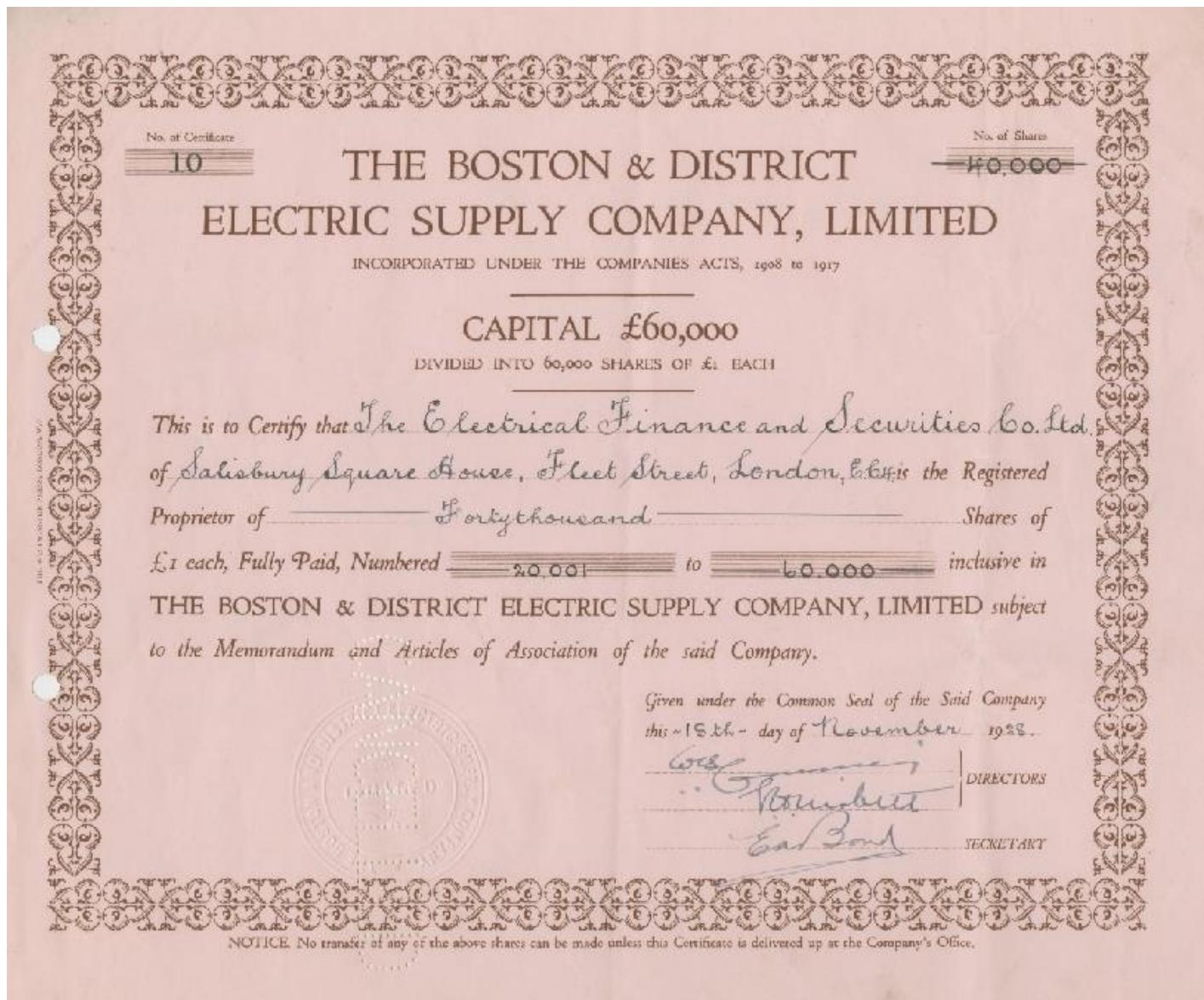
## **Photos of Staythorpe Power Station: No 1 Turbine running on test viewed from the Charge Engineer's Office, and Aerial View, 1950**

These photographs are taken from an album showing the construction of the coal-fired Staythorpe 'A' Power Station, operational from 1950 to 1983. It was built on the side of the River Trent between Southwell and Newark. These are two of 50 photographs in an album documenting its planning, construction and the beginning of operations at the plant, taken between 1946 and 1950. (Ref: MS 835/1)



## Share Transfer Form; 1928

This is a legal document to record details of transfer of share(s) from one shareholder to another. In this case, the Electrical Finance & Securities Company Limited bought 40,000 shares in the Boston and District Electric Supply Company Limited in 1928. (Ref: BEB 7)



# Minute book, Midland Electric Light and Power Company Limited; 1887

Minute books are central to any business archive. They record all the major events in a company's history, from operational activity, shareholder transactions, legislative changes and staffing. This is the earliest document relating to electricity supply in the Midlands in our collections, and it is taken from the Directors' minutes. The origins of the Company are not known, but its 67th annual general meeting was held in 1948, suggesting a start date of about 1881. (Ref: BEX1)

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4<sup>th</sup> April 1887

At a meeting of the Directors duly convened  
and held at the office of the Company 23, Paternoster  
Street, Birmingham at 4 o'clock p.m. on the fourth  
day of April 1887.

Present

Edward Butillard, in the Chair  
John Bell

Submitted

Agreement between the Company and  
Arthur Chamberlain and George Hockham

Resolved

That the Agreement now produced  
and read dated the fourth day of April 1887  
and made between the Company of the first  
part Arthur Chamberlain of the second part  
and George Hockham of the third part providing  
for the acquisition and assumption by the  
Company of the rights and obligations of  
certain negotiations and contracts entered into  
and work executed by the said Arthur Chamberlain  
and George Hockham respectively on the terms  
stated and also providing for the  
immediate sum to the said Arthur Chamberlain  
of £100 and to the said George Hockham of £0  
fully paid up shares of £10 each in the Company  
to be issued and that the Common Seal of  
the Company be forthwith affixed thereto

Resolved

That Messrs Butler Smith and Vincent  
as Solicitors to the Company forthwith proceed  
to register such Agreement in accordance  
with the provisions of the Companies Act 1867

Resolved

That so soon as such registration is  
completed there be issued in accordance with  
the said Agreement fully paid up Shares in the  
Company of £10 each as follows:

Arthur Chamberlain	100	Shares	No.	107	Value
George Hockham	50	"		108	157

R. Butillard J. M. Bell

## Extract from the Minute Book of the Oakham Gas and Electricity Company Limited; 1927

Old meets new! Electricity may have been the future, but until 1927 the Oakham Gas and Electricity Company Limited still used horse-drawn transport. The horse's declining health prompted them to invest in a second-hand car. The company originated in 1840 when the gas works were erected in Oakham, Rutland. An Act of Parliament of 1923 permitted the company to supply electricity and its name changed to the Oakham Gas and Electricity Company Limited. (Ref: BEO)

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	<p><u>August 10th 1927/</u> The Directors met at Oakham when there were present Mr. W. S. Clark (Chairman) Mr. T. Lane, Mr. C. Smith, Mr. F. H. Lane, Mr. R. Timms and the Secretary. The Manager was also present. An apology had been received from Mr. H. W. Wilshire who was unable to be present.</p>
<u>Inspection of works and Ground Lorry</u>	The Directors formally inspected the whole of the Gas and Electricity Works and found everything in good order. They also visited the new Council Houses.
<u>Conciliation of horse &amp; Disposal.</u>	The Manager reported that the horse was still only fit for very light work and recommended selling it to a farmer for farm work. This course was agreed to.
<u>Purchase of another lorry</u>	It was reported that the Lorry does practically all the necessary carting now, but has to be constantly taken off a job to convey the men to other parts of the gas area, thereby causing delay and possible demurrage. It was agreed that Mr. Clark and the Manager be authorised to purchase as opportunity occurred a second-hand motor car or Lorry which could be suitably converted to our purpose. In view of the sale of the horse, notice is to be given to terminate the tenancy of the field rented from the Churchwardens.
<u>Enlargement of Coal yard etc</u>	The enlargement of the coal yard having been inspected the Manager was instructed to erect double light wooden gates for the new gateway in lieu of building up the wall and pier to gateway and to do the small quantity of brickwork thereby necessary.

## Plan of the East Midlands Electricity Board Macclesfield district; mid 20<sup>th</sup> century

The East Midlands Electricity Board began operating on 1 January 1948 following the nationalisation of the electricity industry under the Electricity Act 1947. The area controlled by the board covered Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Rutland and parts of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Peterborough, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. The headquarters for the board was at Mapperley Hall near Nottingham. (Ref: BEE 4/5)



## **Certificate of Incorporation; 1923**

A Certificate of Incorporation is a legal document proving the formation and legal existence of a company, in this case, the Boston & District Electric Supply Company Limited. The offices of the company were in Dolphin Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire. Besco, as it was known, supplied electricity to homes and street lights in Boston; the main street of the town was lit electrically for the first time in August 1924. (Ref: BEB 6/1)

