

Reference code(s): GB 0214 DBL

Title: Brown, Lenox & Co. Ltd, chainworks, Pontypridd records

Creation date(s): 1745-1956

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 0.48 cubic metres (144 items)

Name of creator(s): Brown, Lenox & Co. Ltd, chainworks, Pontypridd, Glamorgan

CONTEXT

Administrative/Biographical history: Samuel Brown (1774-1852), formerly of the Royal Navy, patented a stud-link wrought iron chain, suitable as ships' anchor cables, and began manufacturing in 1803. In 1808 he formed a partnership with his cousin Samuel Lenox and they traded as Samuel Brown & Co Ltd until 1823. The firm's anchor cables were adopted by the Royal Navy in 1810. In 1812, the partners selected a site for their London works at Millwall (Middlesex), close to the Royal Dockyard at Deptford. In 1818, an additional site was acquired at Ynysangharad, Pontypridd (Glamorgan), because of its proximity to supplies of iron and coal. The Newbridge Chain Works, as it became known, grew rapidly in size and reputation, and from the mid nineteenth century was sole contractor to the Royal Navy for the supply of anchor chains. From 1818, the firm manufactured cables suitable for construction of suspension bridges. The prestige of this contract brought orders from merchant shipping companies, passenger lines, and leading engineers such as Thomas Telford and Brunel. The factory closed in 2000.

CONTENT

Scope and content/abstract: Records of the Brown, Lenox & Co. Ltd chainworks, 1745-1956, including deeds, bills, receipts and agreements, relating to the buildings and sites at both Millwall and Newbridge, 1813-1956; papers relating to management and labourers at Millwall and Newbridge, 1855-1918; account books, includes a ledger and a journal, 1823-1826; letters patent, 1815-1929; papers relating to chain cables and anchors etc., 1812-1925; papers relating to Admiralty anchors, 1852-1865; miscellaneous correspondence, includes letter from I. K. Brunel asking for the result of the proof of the new machine [*sic*], 1844-1927; photographs and plans, [c. 1830]-[c. 1930]; and general printed and miscellaneous material - includes Lloyds list, 1745-1943.

ACCESS AND USE

Language/scripts of material: English

System of arrangement: The Brown, Lenox & Co. Ltd records were deposited in two batches, each listed numerically. These have now been combined and re-arranged under subject headings, although the original numbering has been retained in the Glamorgan Record Office catalogue. The records are arranged into: partnership; buildings and site properties; management and labour; as financial records; letters patent; papers relating to plant, technical issues and tests; miscellaneous correspondence; photographs and plans; general printed and miscellaneous material; and portrait of Sir Samuel Brown,(1776-1851).

Conditions governing access: No restrictions

Conditions governing reproduction: Normal Glamorgan Record Office conditions apply

Physical characteristics: Good to fair condition

Finding aids: A hard copy of the catalogue is available at the Glamorgan Record Office.

ARCHIVAL INFORMATION

Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information: All records which meet the collection policy of the Glamorgan Record Office have been retained.

Accruals: Accruals are not expected.

Archival history:

Immediate source of acquisition: Deposited by a private individual at various dates.

ALLIED MATERIALS

Related material: Further records are Glamorgan Record Office, DXAB2. Research notes on the company history are Carmarthenshire Archives Service, DB/96.

DESCRIPTION NOTES

Note: Title supplied from contents of fonds.

Archivist's note: Compiled by Hayden Burns for the ANW project. The following sources were used in the compilation of this description: Glamorgan Record Office, Catalogue of records for Brown Lenox Chainworks; Powell, Don, *Victorian Pontypridd*, (Cardiff, 1996); Jones, Stephens K., 'A link with the Past: The History of the Newbridge Works of Brown Lenox & Co., Pontypridd.' *Glamorgan Historian*, vol. 12 (Glamorgan, 1980).

Rules or conventions: This description follows ANW guidelines based on ISAD(G) second edition, AACR2, and LCSH

Date(s) of descriptions: December 2003
