

## **Northamptonshire Record Office**

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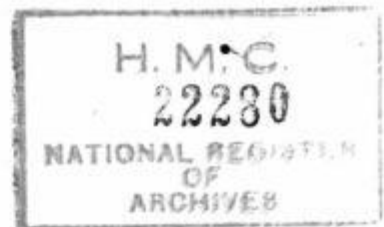
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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RECORD OFFICE



Records of Robert Marriott Ltd.,  
Builders, of  
Marriott House, Higham Road, Rushden.

Accession 1978/153

Robert Marriott, born in 1865 in Huntingdonshire, learnt the principles of building from his father, who had worked with Lord Brassey on the construction of the Great Northern Line from Huntingdon to Peterborough.

In 1890, by this time a master builder, Robert Marriott formed his own business, operating from his house in Higham Road, Rushden, still the site of the Company's offices today. His firm specialised in all types of building, smithery, lead and plasterwork, joinery and intricate masonry and carving. He was also a pioneer in re-introducing the system of trained apprentices. Building and repair work was carried out on large houses, historical buildings, new factories, for example for John White and the repair of churches and other ecclesiastical buildings such as Dunstable Priory Church, Bedfordshire. On Robert Marriott's death, in March 1948, restoration work was being done on Long Melford Hall, Suffolk and Hatfield House.

In April 1939, the Company was incorporated as Robert Marriott Ltd. On 1st. May 1968, the Company became The Robert Marriott Group Ltd.

Robert Marriott's eldest son, Mr. R.A. Marriott, who joined the firm in the 1920's, became Chairman in 1948. He began the diversification of the activities of the Company into building housing and schools for local authorities in Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The Outpatients Department of Northampton General Hospital, built by the Company in 1948, was the first hospital building in Britain constructed under the National Health Service.

In 1945, Colonel J.R. Marriott, a younger son of Robert Marriott, joined the Company and took over its control from 1957, until his retirement in 1971. A grandson of Robert Marriott still remains with the Company as Contracts Manager.

The 1960's saw a further rapid expansion of the Company under the new Managing Director, Mr. E.A. Brook. Local authority building increased and contracts were taken up for the building of Government aerodromes, e.g. for the U.S. Airforce at Alconbury and the Fire Services Technical Training College at Moreton-in-the-Marsh. H.M. Borstals at Wellingborough and Olney were built by the Company and the Buckinghamshire County Council offices in Aylesbury. It was during this period that the slogan "Robert Marriott build fast"

Records of Robert Marriott Ltd.

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came into being. Under the new management of Mr. E.A. Brook, Robert Marriott Ltd. sold 85% of their equity to J.L. Kier & Co. Ltd. and 15% to Trehaven Ltd. A merger later took place and Robert Marriott Ltd. became part of French-Kier Holdings Ltd.

About 1971, a new building in Washbrook Road, Rushden was built for the Company and the first part of the new office block in Higham Road, on the original site of Robert Marriott's orchard and tennis court. In 1974, the rest of the office block was added on the site of Robert Marriott's house and the building in Washbrook Road became the Company's Social Club. The Higham Road site now consists of the new office block (Marriott House) and the Company's vehicle servicing and maintenance centre and their own construction plant comprising a joinery works, blacksmiths shop and drylining and painting sections with large storage areas.

Robert Marriott Ltd. still continues the craft building traditions of the original business, under its Special Projects Division. This includes the renovation of churches and historical buildings, for example repair work upon Easton Maudit church, the restoration of Wellingborough's Tythe Barn and extensive alterations and renovations at Woburn Abbey. Other work in this Division includes modernisation and extensions to factories, offices, shops and warehouses and alterations to hotels, public houses, restaurants and private houses.

The Company, sited amidst the New Town Development of Milton Keynes, Northampton, Corby, Wellingborough and Peterborough, has secured many contracts from the local Development Corporations to become one of the largest builders of new towns in the Country, as at the end of 1977, the Company had built over 60% of the new houses for Northampton Development Corporation and 32% of those for Milton Keynes, as well as many houses for Wellingborough and other district councils. Other important projects have been the construction of Peterborough's new Community, Social and Recreational Centre, the Cresset Centre, Riverside House on Bedford Road, Northampton, buildings for Brown Brothers Ltd. on Bedford Road, Northampton and many factories on Northampton Industrial Estates at Moulton Park and Brackmills.

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Robert Marriott Ltd.

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|----|---|------------------|
| 1  | Minute Books: of Robert Marriott Ltd. (formed 1939) and Robert Marriott Group Ltd. (formed May, 1968).  | May 1939-1978    |
| 2  | Company Accounts  | 1969-1978        |
| 3  | Scrapbooks: containing newspaper cuttings and photographs concerning work completed by the Company.   | 1962-1971        |
| 4  | *Letter from Robert Marriott Jnr. to the Rushden branch of the Capital and Counties Bank Ltd., placing deeds of a copyhold estate at Rushden in their hands as security. A schedule of the deeds is included.<br>(Xerox copy obtained for the Record Office.) | 28th. Nov 1896   |
| 5  | *Letter from Robert Marriott Jnr. to the Rushden branch of the Capital and Counties Bank Ltd., placing deeds of a freehold estate at Rushden in their hands as security. A schedule of the deeds is included.<br>(Xerox copy obtained for the Record Office.) | 7th. Sept 1897   |
| 6  | *Letter from Robert Marriott to the Northants Union Bank Ltd., depositing deeds of a freehold estate at Rushden in their hands as security. A schedule of the deeds is included.<br>(Xerox copy obtained for the Record Office.)                              | 19th. July 1913  |
| 7  | *Magazine Article: about Robert Marriott Ltd.<br>(Xerox copy obtained for the Record Office.)   | c.1974           |
| 8  | *Copy of Speech: "A tribute to Robert Marriott" from Sir Albert Richardson.<br>(Xerox copy obtained for the Record Office.)   | 19th. March 1948 |
| 9  | *Leaflet: "Design and Construct Service" of Robert Marriott Ltd.  | c.1975           |
| 10 | *Leaflet: "Robert Marriott Ltd."<br>A general description of the Company and its activities.  | c.1977           |
| 11 | *Leaflet: "Rehabilitation"<br>The Home Improvement Schemes of Robert Marriott Ltd.  | c.1977           |
| 12 | *Brochure: "The Cresset"<br>Commemorative brochure on the completion of the Cresset Centre at Peterborough.   | Jan 1978         |

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13	*Book: Spicer & Pegler's Book-Keeping and Accounts by Bigg & Wilson.	1945
14	*Book: Builder's Cost Control Bonusing and Accounts by F. Brandwood.	1952
15	*Book: Company Direction by John Seymour	1954
16	*Book: Accounting and Costing Systems for Small and Medium-Sized Builders.	1951

\*Documents or xerox copies of documents obtained by the Record Office.

April, 1978.