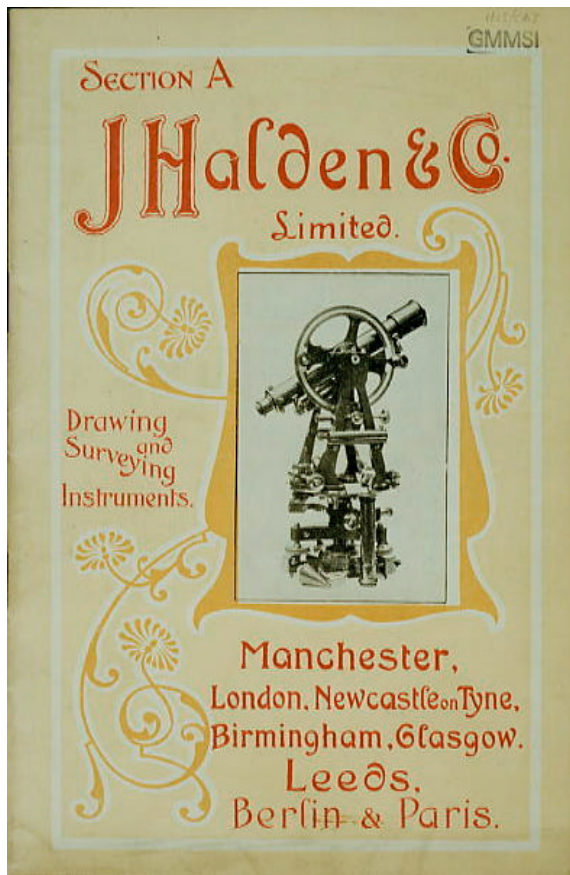


Joseph Halden & Co.

Joseph Halden & Co. was an important Manchester firm of drawing and surveying instrument makers. The Museum's collections include scientific instruments made by the company.

Records do not give details of Joseph Halden's early life. In the early 1870s, he worked as a stationer at Gleave Street in Liverpool. In 1878, in partnership with A. G. Thornton, he set up a business as a wholesale drawing material importer and mounting paper manufacturer at 8 Albert Square in Manchester. However, a rift developed between the two men and, after a couple of years, Thornton moved to his own premises on Deansgate.

Halden was soon making drawing instruments too and built up a wholesale and export trade. The Albert Square premises probably had workshops which sufficed in the company's early years. However, in 1889, the company acquired works on East Street, off Lower Mosley Street. It was sufficiently profitable for Joseph Halden to move his home out to the fashionable area of Sale in the late 1880s. In 1892, he may have retired to Southport and the company was presumably taken over by his son.



At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the company patented several designs for drawing and surveying instruments, including two by Joseph Halden himself. The company expanded quite considerably during this period. It acquired additional works on Lund Street, Cornbrook, in 1900 and warehousing on Altrincham Street, off London Road, in 1903. Additional premises were acquired at 37 Brazenose Street, next door to 8 Albert Square, in 1904. Fire destroyed the Cornbrook works in 1908 and the company built new works in Reddish, Stockport, in the same year. These works were large enough to enable Halden's to dispose of the warehousing on Altrincham Street. Considerable extensions were carried out to the building 11 years later. By 1920, the company also had branches in London, Newcastle, Birmingham, Glasgow and Leeds. Halden's supplied the full range of drawing and surveying instruments, drawing materials, photocopying machines and copying services for engineers' and architects' drawings. The

company considered its Calculex circular calculator to be about the cheapest and most serviceable model available. It was even sold by A. G. Thornton Ltd.

In the 1930s, the company enlarged the photocopying side of its business. It opened a copying department at 25 Brazenose Street and began to patent many new designs for photographic developing apparatus, photosensitive materials, blueprint processes and photocopying machines. In 1941, John Lionel Halden, Joseph Halden's grandson, became a technical director. He took an active part in research and development and patented photographic ammonia developing apparatus. The company continued to prosper. The works were extended in the 1960s to provide an enlarged engineering department for the manufacture of photocopying machines and a warehouse for drawing office supplies.

J. L. Halden died in August 1965 at the age of 49. He had recently been appointed chairman of the company and had been the technical director for 24 years. The managers ran the firm until it was taken over by the Ozalid Group at the beginning of 1969. Thirteen days later, the works manager announced the closure of the Reddish works with the loss of 75 jobs. Some employees, including the area sales representatives, were kept on at the Manchester branch office. The large stocks of photo paper were moved to smaller premises after the works were sold. Most employees were offered jobs with other members of the Ozalid Group. The unions and Ministry of Labour were asked to assist in finding work for those unable to move to other parts of the country. Most of the engineering work was moved to Block & Anderson's works at Aycliffe, Co. Durham, and the manufacture of the wooden drawing office furniture was taken over by another member firm in Colchester, Essex.

For more information:

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