

F Wrighton & Sons Ltd



Hackney to Walthamstow via Leyton

The company were makers of high class furniture and originally was located at Brampton Road in Hackney. In 1929 they moved to Leyton. In 1933 the company built a purpose designed factory (Brampton Works) on six acres of ground in Billet Road, Walthamstow.

According to British History On-line

[http://www.british-](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42779)

[history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42779](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42779) in 1949

the company had two subsidiaries. These were: GlobeWernicke Ltd which was discontinued about 1967 and Wrighton Aircraft.

The GlobeWernicke Brand



The information about GlobeWernicke is intriguing and unfortunately I have not been able to find out anything else about it. GlobeWernicke was an American company that patented a modular bookcase system in 1892. This system allowed the user to stack units together in different configurations and it seems to be like an up-market IKEA system. A unique part of the system was that the bookcases had glass doors that opened and via an ingenious 'up and over' mechanism slid into a recess above the shelf.

The idea was very successful and there were

GlobeWernicke company's in the USA, Canada, UK, France,

Belgium and Austria making and selling the bookcases. I suspect that the company may have operated on a franchise/license basis that allowed reputable quality manufacturers like Wrighton to use the GlobeWernicke brand name.

WWII

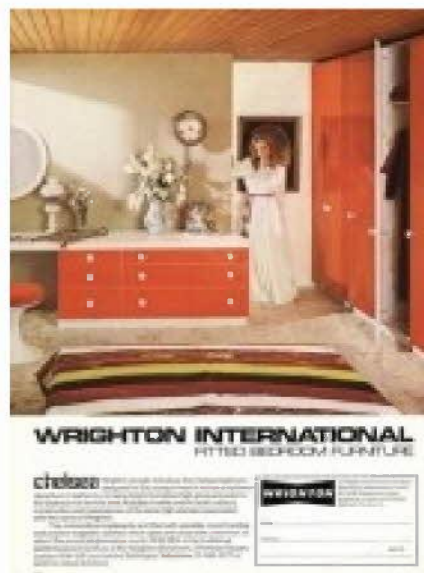


Early in WWII , Wrighton manufactured aircraft parts for the De Haviland Mosquito airplane at the Billet Road factory.. In 1940, a subsidiary company called Wrighton Aircraft took over a garage in Torquay http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Torquay They employed up to three hundred people making aircraft parts for various airplanes including the Short Sunderland Flying Boat.

Design & Quality

After the war Wrighton resumed manufacture of Kitchen, Living & Bed room furniture and established a reputation for the quality of their products and won several design awards. The design detail even extended to the ironmongery used on the furniture. This period was the heyday of the furniture manufacturers in the Lea Valley and the numbers of local manufacturers included :

F Wrighton, F A Austin, Harris Lebus, Nathan, Beautyity Homeworthy, & Lazurus who



flourished and achieved national and international renown for their products.



Princess Margaret

By the courtesy of Facebook we learn from Jane Willcox that 'When I was at junior school in the 70's, Princess Margaret came to Wrightons factory. As we were at Roger Ascham school, we were allowed to all walk down there and stand opposite waving flags to see her being driven in..I'm sure our head girl met her and gave her a posy of flowers, I was so jealous it wasn't me...lol..'

Picture above – Princess Margaret at her home in Kensington Palace

The End Of The (Production) Line

I'm not sure when Wrightons closed although I suspect it was at the end of the 60's or the early 70's. (I hope that one of our readers will let me know) This was the period when Walthamstow lost most of its furniture industry. The reason for its demise will be the same as the reasons why all the other furniture company's using traditional materials made by trades people either relocated or went out of business. Essentially, they were faced with competition from manufacturers who were mass producing flat pack furniture that was made from non traditional materials (Laminated and printed particle boards etc) and was machined to templates by semi skilled workers. The irony is that today, Wrighton furniture is highly desirable and attracts good prices from discerning collectors. There is even a piece of their kitchen furniture in the Victoria & Albert museum.

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