



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

The Rise and Fall of Amersham International



Professor Alan Perkins

Radiological Sciences, School of Medicine, University of Nottingham
Medical Physics & Clinical Engineering, Nottingham University Hospitals

Chilcote House - Amersham's Birthplace



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

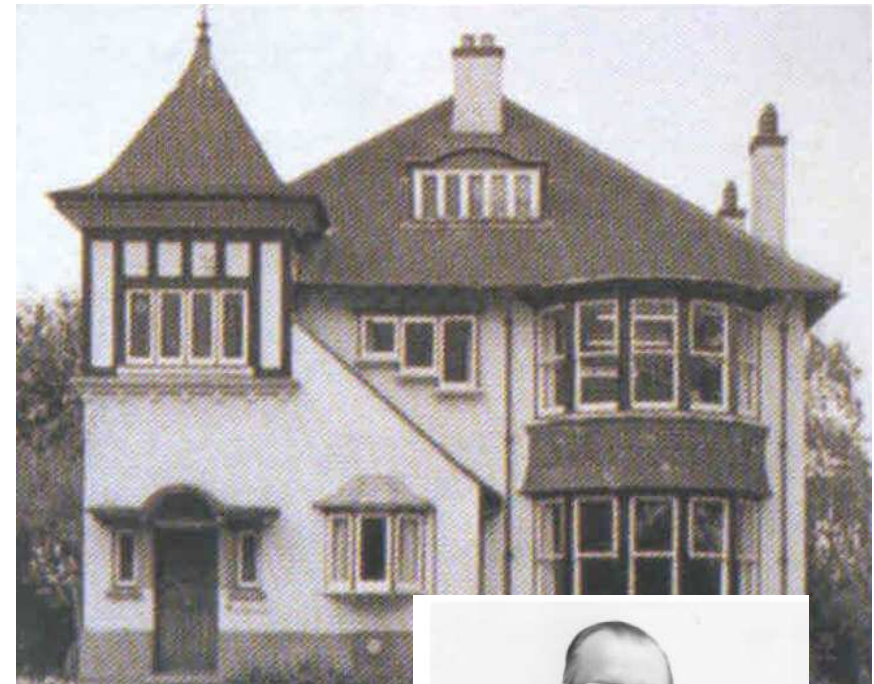
1940 Chilcote House and grounds were bought by Thorium Ltd for £2,000.

Consignment of radium bromide in transit from Portugal to Germany intercepted by British forces .

This was used for making luminous dials and gunsights for ships and aircraft.

1946 Chilcote House was purchased from Thorium Ltd for £40,000 by the Ministry of Supply.

The site was renamed The Grove Centre in October 2001



Dr Walter Patrick Grove, CBE –

Thorium Laboratories 1946



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

“a national centre for the processing and distribution of radium, radon and artificial radioactive substances for scientific, medical and industrial purposes.”

The first UK radon extraction plant producing radium capsules
for cancer treatment.



Radiochemical Centre 1949



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

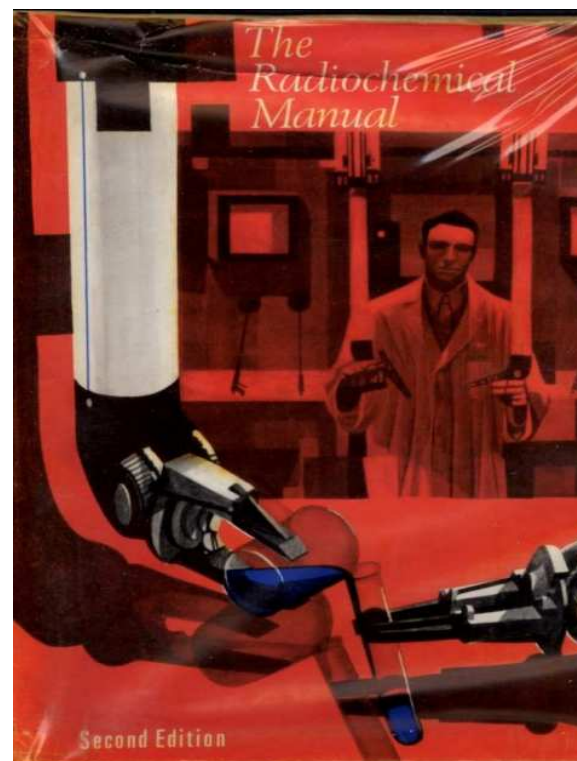
An outstation of the Atomic Energy Research establishment (Harwell) employing 70 staff.

1950s production of carbon-14 and tritium

Production of beta and gamma emitters

- For the continuous control of sheet product thickness (paper and plastics)
- Checking desired content levels in packaged products
- Static eliminators.

In 1957 UKAEA made the Radiochemical Centre into a single comprehensive organisation for the production and marketing of radioisotopes (a role shared with Harwell for the previous 9 years).



1950s & 60s



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

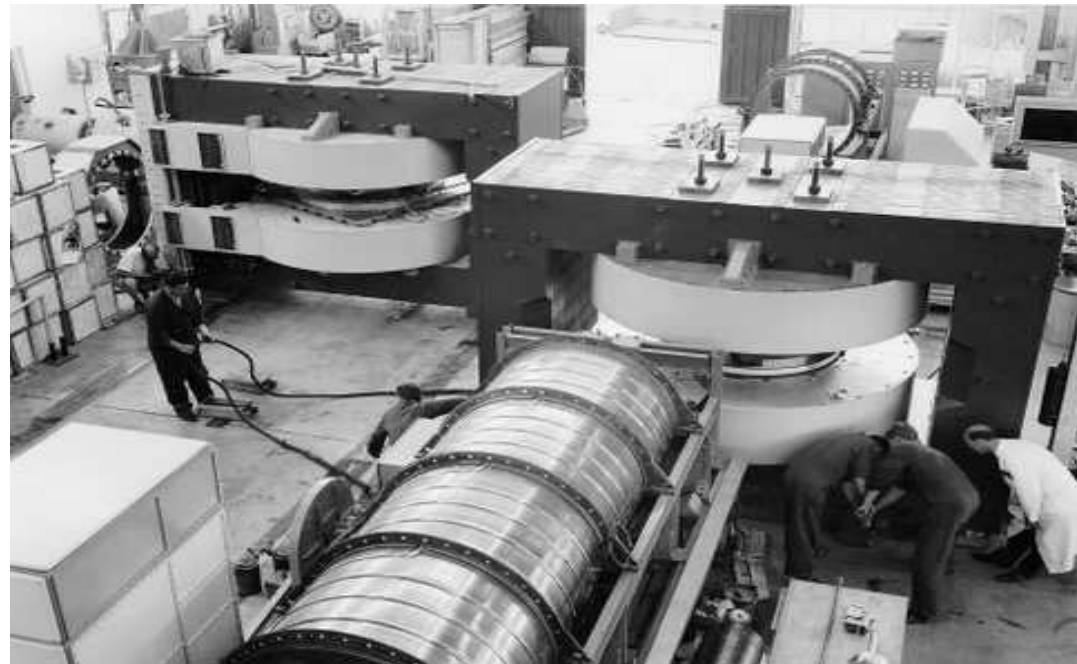
Global Exports to over 40 countries

*Unloading a radioactive shipment from the
wingtip of a BOAC Bristol Britannia*

Reducing the need for heavy shielding!



Cyclotron products included sodium-22, cobalt 57, arsenic-74 and cadmium-109.



By 1990 Philips cyclotron running over 160h per week
Second Cyclotron Corp installed running 100h per week for ^{201}Tl
Third Skanditronix cyclotron installed.



1965 First commercial RIA kit for measuring insulin levels in diabetic patients.

Universal assay tool.

Medical Monographs produced in the 1960s and 70s

New production sites

1970 Cardiff laboratories for life sciences

1974 Gloucester Freeze Drying Plant

In 1982, The Radiochemical Centre Ltd was renamed Amersham International Ltd.

Amersham International was spun off from Britain's nuclear industry - Margaret Thatcher's first privatisation as Prime Minister.



1982 Privatisation

On 24 February, the London Stock Exchange offered a 142p share offer.

The issue was 24.6 times oversubscribed and the price rocketed 48p in seconds, increasing the company's value from £71m to £95m.

- 1983 Amertec™ generator
- 1991 Amersham acquires Oncoseed™ (I-125) Rapidstrand (1994)
- 1992 Acquisition of Medi-Physics US
- 1994 Myoview™ (developed with Cardiff University, global sales £80 million by 2000)
- 1994 Amersham acquires 20% Nihon Medi-Physics Co Japan
- 1997 Amersham Pharmacia Biotech merger
- 2000 Launch of DaTSCAN™
 - 26 June 2000 Bill Clinton & Tony Blair announce completion of the initial sequencing of the human genome (accomplished using Amersham DNA sequencing kits)
- 2001 IMANET formed

2002 Amersham plc acquires Pharmacia stake
Annual turnover of £1.62 billion

Amersham

Amersham International

Amersham Nicomed

Amersham Pharmacia Biomed

Amersham Searle (US)

Amersham Buchler (Germany)

2003 Amersham was bought by GE for \$9.5 billion to become part of GE Healthcare Life Sciences, with a turnover of \$3.7 billion and 2,000 U.K. employees.

The 2003 GE venture was to centralise healthcare operations in the UK !

In reality.....

- Gloucester and Cardiff sites closed

- Many products withdrawn

- IMANET closed in 2011

Dicopac TM
(Schilling Test)

⁵⁷Co/⁵⁸Co

J Nutr 2007;137:2481–2484.

Dear Customer.....

- ^{51}Cr -chromate
- ^{51}Cr -EDTA
- ^{89}Sr -strontium chloride

1990s Site entrance
White Lion Road

The End !