



The Royce Crane A Bailey

This article was written in response to a question asked in the Bygones section of the Derby Telegraph in November 2011.

The Rolls–Royce Heritage Trust has an example of one of these cranes (5 tons SWL) in its premises at the Light Alloy Factory (12 Shop) on Osmaston Road, Derby.

This crane was saved during the break-up of the Nightingale Road complex but, as yet, it is not a working example. It does, however, carry the scars of a wartime attack on its original home.

There is one other, a larger example (10 tons SWL) that is still in regular use today and it is located in the main workshop of the Draka Cable Company on Alfreton Road, Derby. Complete with its original nameplate, this crane is used to move massive drums of cable around their workshop.

There are no huge 'I' section girders on a Royce crane, they are of a geodetic design which looks like a latticework of smaller metal strips and the original design even had a cage slung underneath to house the operator.

Some years ago, the crane at Draka needed an overhaul and it was discovered that some of the switchgear, and other electrical components, were compatible with some more modern cranes and these items were reused, a pendant control panel was also incorporated at that time.

This crane is at least 80 years old and proves the old saying that can still be applied to many of Sir Henry Royce's products, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. These photographs were taken by me on a group visit to the site two years ago.



Additional information

Frederick Henry Royce began making domestic electric fittings at Cooke Street, Hulme, Manchester in 1884. The company had the name Royce Ltd in 1899. Electrically driven cranes and hoists were among the company's products in 1903 when the first motor cars were made. With financial assistance from Charles Stewart Rolls, a new company, Rolls-Royce was formed in 1906. The car business was moved to Derby in 1907 leaving Royce Ltd to continue to manufacture electrically driven cranes, hoists, capstans and winches at a factory in Trafford Park. [1] The company was acquired by Herbert Morris of Loughborough following Sir Henry Royce's death in April 1933.

The Haslam & Newton engineering company set up Derby Cables Ltd with a new factory built in 1929 on Alfreton Road. Derby Cables was acquired by Crompton Parkinson in 1932. [2] The factory was finally owned by Draka UK Industrial Cables Ltd. It ceased production at the end of September 2012. [3] With the exception a building that has been incorporated into Eggleston Steel, the factory had been demolished by 2015 and the Royce crane is believed to have been scrapped. New industrial units now occupy the site up to the junction with Haslams Lane.

References

- 1 – www.gracesguide.co.uk/F._H._Royce_and_Co
- 2 – numerous items in the Derby Daily Telegraph from August 1929 onwards
- 3- Derby City Council planning reference 07/14/01056