Tribute to J.T. 'Jack' Jeffries – Bristol Aircraft

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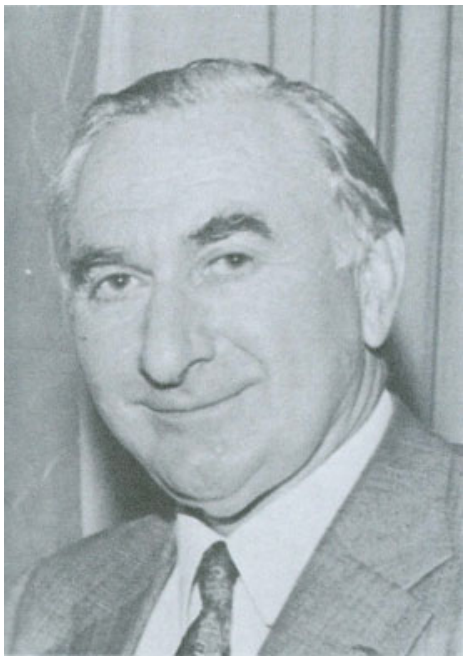
Early in his career during WW2, whilst working for British Aircraft, Jack was sent over to California to represent the company with North American Aviation whose successful fighter aircraft used a Rolls Royce engine.



He noted in particular the successful use of very thin aluminium sheet on control surfaces, which inspired the same approach on the Brabazon and succeeding aircraft.

He observed the achievement of 80% production learning over thousands of aircraft made, and the fact that it was production engineers rather than designers who received professional awards as a result.

Shortly after his return to U.K. he became responsible for the manufacture of guided weapons during both development and production.

He was responsible for proposing cost reduction by design and for much of its further cost reduction during manufacture implementation. Secrecy prevented his achieving lifetime recognition for the resulting huge profits from foreign sales of the system.

Later, he was responsible for all aircraft manufacture at Bristol, achieving 80% learning on all manufacture of identical aircraft.

He also holds the World Record for cost reduction of component manufacture, bringing in the Guided Weapons team to reduce the cost of the BAC111 air stairs, resulting in 80% cost reduction.

He ended his career responsible for Concorde production, in which production learning was limited to the third production aircraft and its successors because of extensive redesign.

The profits he made on Bloodhound saved Bristol Aircraft from bankruptcy enabled Bristol Aircraft to join the British Aircraft Corporation and later provided funding the development of the BAC111 aircraft.

He received no award or recognition for his achievements, a source of considerable disappointment to him in later life.

David Farrar
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