WPPRG Exhibition No. 12.

The merger with Odhams presented the management with a serious problem of over-staffing, and in 1985 a compulsory redundancy programme resulted in a reduction of manpower of about 50%. In this year Sun lost the contract to print WOMAN'S OWN, a magazine it had produced for half a century. Two years later, the company lost another major contract, this one for the SUNDAY TIMES colour supplement, after twenty-five years. However, in1987 an announcement was made that production of the DAILY MIRROR was to move from London, to Watford-------in the former Odhams no.4 building, beside what is now the Asda supermarket! Maxwell had retained ownership of this building, when he sold the rest of the site at a useful profit.

The move was completed in 1988.

PICTURES HERE OF

MIRROR COLOUR PRINT.

The market for gravure printing continued to shrink throughout the 1980s, and because of this and continuing demarcation disputes regarding staff working in both gravure and offset processes, in 1989 the management of Odhams-Sun {The use of this name never really caught on, and the Whippendell Road factory was usually referred to as 'Sun Printers'; old habits die very hard!} took the momentous decision to abandon the production method of which it was a world pioneer and leader—four-colour web rotary gravure—and became an all offset printer in an effectively much smaller factory; much of the Whippendell Road premises stood idle and derelict.

In 1989 as well, the remnants of Sun Printers was bought out of Maxwell's empire by the management. By this time the labour force had reduced to about two hundred and forty, and the company was called BPCC-Sun.

Robert Maxwell died in mysterious circumstances in November 1991 and six weeks after his death it was discovered that he had misappropriated over £500,000,000 from his employees' pension fund!

In 1996, BPCC merged with Watmoughs (Holdings) plc, to form the Polestar Group of companies. Under this name, in 2004, theSun Printers site, by then confined to the former paper warehouse in Ascot Road, closed completely.