

Preface

This book is a personal story reflecting my life-time interest, fascination with, and enthusiasm for, aviation. It started with my birth in Leeds in July 1940 and the beginning of the Battle of Britain. Leeds was fortunate to avoid heavy bombing in World War II. My recollection of the war years was one of black-out curtains, sirens and air raid shelters. I also recollect what must have been D-Day with large numbers of aircraft flying over Leeds at night en route to France. My father served for a period in the RAF and he started my enthusiasm for aircraft when he gave me a black-painted model of a Spitfire. He furthered my interest by taking me to a Battle of Britain air display at RAF Church Fenton near Leeds. This was my first encounter with World War II fighters and bombers and the new Meteor and Vampire jets. Later, I returned the favour by taking my three children to regular Battle of Britain air displays at RAF Finningley, near Doncaster, which was a Vulcan bomber base.

At secondary school in Leeds, my interest in aviation continued and was reflected in diary entries. Looking back, I see that I was obsessed with recording crashes of RAF aircraft and whether the pilot ejected successfully. At the time, little did I realise that the high rate of Meteor aircraft crashes partly reflected technical problems with the aircraft and the limitations of its ejector seat. The 1950s was also a 'golden age' for British aviation and the UK aircraft industry. This was the period of major change and innovation in military and civil aircraft. Military types included the Hunter, Swift, Canberra and the V-bombers. Civil types included the Comet, Brabazon, Princess, Viscount and Britannia. It was also my first experience of flight. The annual family holiday was taken at Blackpool and I saved sufficient to afford a pleasure flight in a de Havilland Rapide which flew around Blackpool Tower.

My first encounter with economics came when I arrived at Leeds Central High School. My form master persuaded me to study A-level economics with an example based on inheritance tax. The example interested me but I was not persuaded by his argument that the state had a right to all an individual's assets on death. By the time I left school, I had decided on a career in teaching and spent a year as an unqualified teacher at Hunslet Carr School. Later, I studied economics at Hull

University. On graduation in 1962, I was offered an opportunity to study for a PhD: when asked whether I had a topic for my PhD, I had no hesitation in selecting 'The Economics of the Aircraft Industry'. Shortly after starting my PhD, I met my future wife and we were married in 1966.

My PhD allowed me to visit many of the UK's major aircraft firms and meet some of the industry's leading personnel, including Sir Sydney Camm of Hurricane fame. Little did I realise it at the time, but the early 1960s marked the end of many famous company names. The names of Avro, Blackburn, Bristol, de Havilland, Gloster, Handley Page, Hawker, Supermarine and Vickers all disappeared in a major industry re-structuring.

After leaving Hull, I arrived in 1964 at the new University of York where initially I taught Industry and Labour economics. These were exciting times under the academic leadership of Alan Peacock and Jack Wiseman with Lord Eric James as Vice Chancellor. Coincidentally, the Heslington site of the new University had previously been the headquarters of 4 Group RAF Bomber Command. Work on my PhD continued and I had opted to submit my thesis by publication so avoiding the tedium of writing a lengthy thesis which would never be read by anyone! I accumulated sufficient publications for the PhD which was awarded in 1974: Professor Berrick Saul was my external who later became Vice Chancellor at York. Interestingly, at the start of my PhD, one famous economics professor originally forecast that there 'was not a PhD in the aircraft industry' – further proof that economists are not very good at forecasting! The year 1974 also added to my academic experience when, together with the family, I spent a semester at the University of Illinois.

In 1977, I was awarded a NATO Research Fellowship which allowed me to visit the major US defence establishments. These included the Pentagon, McDonnell at St Louis, General Dynamics at Fort Worth, Lockheed, Northrop and Rand in Los Angeles and Boeing in Seattle. A family trip to the USA made it even more enjoyable. The Fellowship also allowed me to visit European aircraft firms and led to a book on NATO Arms Co-operation (Allen and Unwin, 1982).

By this time, my academic career had shifted towards the relatively new discipline of defence economics. In 1982, I was appointed the first Director of York's new Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRISS), and in 1990 I created a Centre for Defence Economics which remained in existence until my retirement from the University in 2007.

Why write a book on the Political Economy of Aerospace Industries? This book reflects my interest in the industry and in the view that the economic analysis of the industry is important to understanding its

performance and role in an economy. The emphasis on Political Economy reflects the continuing influence of government on the fortunes of the industry.

Many have contributed to this book, some unknowingly. These include Ron Barback, Derek Braddon, Neil Davies, Keith Hayward, David Kirkpatrick, David Moden, Alan Peacock, Philip Pugh, Todd Sandler, Ron Smith, Graham Trevarthen, Stuart Wilson and Jack Wiseman. My graduate students have helped and they include Ian Jackson, Peter MacDonald, Ben Solomon, Selami Sezgin, Tony Turner and Vasilis Zervos. Further contributions resulted from my role as adviser and consultant to such organisations as the UN, EC, EDA, UK House of Commons Defence Committee, UK Ministry of Defence, QinetiQ, DSTL and other UK Government Departments. I learned much from being Chair of the Finance Group of the Aerospace and Innovation Growth Team. I have also been consultant to a number of aerospace companies including BAe, Lockheed Martin and Saab.

The greatest contribution has been from my wife who has had to tolerate my obsession with aviation (as well as fly fishing and football). Wisely, none of my children chose to become economists. My son was attracted by the legal profession and both daughters have become academics: Lucy as a Professor of English at the University of Michigan, USA and Cecilia as Senior Lecturer in Human Resources at Manchester Metropolitan University. I remain under the illusion that the best is yet to come!

Keith Hartley
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