

## JOHN CORY & SONS, LTD., MOUNT STUART HOUSE, CARDIFF

Taken from "British Bulletin of Commerce" Survey, 1955

John Cory was born in 1823 at Poundstock in Cornwall, the son of a farmer. As a young man he went to sea and in due course became Master, first of a coasting vessel, later of larger ships trading to the Continent. In 1854 he set up in business on his own in Padstow and bought his first ship, the MILLICENT, a 52 ft wooden smack. By 1863 he owned two larger ships and had retired from the sea to manage them, but as Padstow -had started to decline as a port, in 1872 he moved with his family to Cardiff.

Cardiff owed its rise to coal, and much of the firm's prosperity was built upon its export, and the import of iron ore from Spain. John Cory had married some twenty years previous to moving and he now brought his eldest son, JOHN, into the business, soon to be followed by his youngest son, HERBERT.

In 1885 John took his sons into formal partnership and the firm became John Cory and Sons, carrying on business as iron ore merchants, timber importers and coal exporters as well as ship-owners. When, in 1891, John Cory died the elder son took over as Chairman and in 1898 the firm became a limited company. Meanwhile the business continued to grow, so that in 1898 it had twenty-three ships, and had moved to larger offices - the present building.

On the coal side special attention was devoted to the famous coking coals and Cory Trading Company was amongst the largest exporters in the UK. Cory appointed representatives in Newcastle and Hull to oversee their interests. In 1913 Messrs. Marchbank and Bainbridge took charge of these areas and were later joined by Dan Stonehouse. On the retirement of two of the partners the firm was incorporated in 1927 as Stonehouse and Cery, Limited.

The first World War took many of the firm's employees and twenty ships: one, the "ROSS", rammed and sank a U-boat. To replace these losses the Directors in 1916 bought the Newport firm of Orders and Handford.

The family continued to increase in numbers and the two sons of John, JOHN and CHARLES, and two of Herbert's sons, DONALD and FRANK, joined the business. Herbert was elected to Parliament in 1915 as Unionist member for Cardiff and later as Conservative and

Unionist member for Cardiff South. In 1919 he was created a Baronet. John was Chairman of the Cardiff Channel Dry Dock and Pontoon Company and Mountstuart Dry Dock.

1920 saw the start of the post-war shipping boom; new firms sprang up in Cardiff and throughout the country, and when the boom ended in 1923 more than half the shipping firms in Cardiff crashed. Cory's however survived and continued to replace its tonnage but at a slower rate. The iron ore trade with Spain was becoming less satisfactory and the subsidiary firm, The Seville and United Kingdom Carrying Co Ltd, had been wound up soon after the war and now, in 1927, the firm's Middlesborough office was closed due to the exhaustion of high grade ore.

1931 saw a further slump in shipping and in December the Chairman, John Cory, died at the age of 76. His death was closely followed by his brother, Sir Herbert, in 1933 and of Sir Herbert's two sons, Frank in 1934 and Sir Donald in 1935. On the death of Sir Donald the Herbert Cory side of the family lost their last member in the firm for FRED, who had managed the firm's London office at Ockenden, had taken to farming on the closing of that office in 1932. It was agreed that the John Cory side of the family should take over their interests but this inevitably led to some curtailment of the firm's activities.

In 1936 the firm had only three ships left, but the Trading Company was fully engaged in exporting coal to Spain. In 1939 John Cory died leaving only his brother Charles to carry on into the second World War, where their remaining tonnage was lost. After the war they took tonnage on charter from the Ministry of Transport. In 1948 they bought a ship from the Ministry and the Coal Department started up again, but the market was now controlled by The National Coal Board.

RAYMOND, elder son of Vharles, the first of a new generation, came from the Navy and joined the firm, as did many other employees back from service, though there were many who had lost their lives, particularly among the ship's crews.

The firm looked for new activities. In 1939 the Cefn-On-Basic Co Ltd had been acquired by Cory's Trading. Their plant produces first class doloma and the Company contracted with all the South Wales steel works. An airbroking department was started and has expanded into the travel business with agencies for all the

principal liner and air companies. The company has a financial interest in Cambrian Airways, the principal air operator in Wales. The family also has an interest in ship chandling.

The above history was from an article written in 1955 and I am led to believe that John Cory Ltd is now a Travel Agency and Tourist Operator: shipping interests are with Cory Brothers Shipping Ltd.

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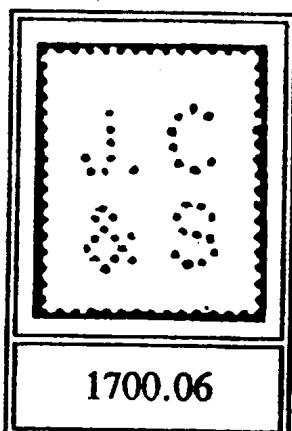
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In use: 1895-1905.

Dates: 17 Feb 1905 (late usage!).

Issues: B 1d E ½d(verb), 2½d

Ident:

Pmks: D57, Bute Docks (Cardiff).