

## McDOUGALL BROS – CHEMICAL MANUFACTURERS

Maurice Harp

In Bulletin 442 **Roy Gault** wrote about experimental cancellations found on early perfins. A few weeks back a 1d lilac cover turned up on the market that provided a confirmed identity for M1220.01M and had an early Hoster cancellation. The cover was another one from the hoard of covers recovered from J Marrant who was a grocer based in Ryde, Isle of Wight. Being a grocer you would think that McDougall Bros would be the flour millers. Although that's how they started by the time of this cover this McDougall was simply a chemical manufacturer.



If we turn up the trade directories of the period you will find this extensive entry. So I guess Marrant was buying their soap and disinfectants.

McDougall Bros manufacturing and agricultural chemists, manufacturers of patent carbolic disinfectants in powder, fluid and soap; carbolic acid, non-poisonous sheep dipping composition, artificial manures, ammoniacal salts, chemicals &c.; contractors for gas purification; manufacturers of patent sugar and oil cake for cattle 10 Mark la EC and 68 Port st Manchester manufactories Chadderton nr Manchester & Millwall dock E

So how did the company come about. In 1845 Alexander McDougall, set up as a manufacturing chemist in Manchester. By 1864 The McDougall Brothers (Alexander, Isaac, James Thomas, John and Arthur) had developed and produced a patent substitute for yeast.

This was the starting point which was not only to revolutionise home baking, but firmly position McDougall's as a household name, as pioneers of self-raising flour. But Arthur McDougall was still interested in matters chemical and was taking out various patents for chemical manufacture.

By 1869 milling had become an important part of the business, especially after using different millers, the results of their flour was varied. At this time the company opened the Wheatsheaf Mill in the East End of London as the market for their self-raising flour had now extended into the South of England. But Arthur was at the same time taking out a patent for “improvements in the manufacture of blacking”, in 1873 for “improvements in the manufacture of manures” and in 1874 “improvements in the furnaces used in the manufacture of alkali and other products.”

Clearly this was a company working in two directions and something had to give. So in 1880 the partnership was dissolved and one company became two. Our McDougall Brothers, had their office at Port-street, in the city of Manchester, at the Irk Vale Chemical Works, Chadderton (near Oldham), with a London office at 10 Mark Lane, and at the Millwall Docks, London,



There is one last twist in the tail. In 1926 the two McDougall Bros companies were re-united to form McDougalls Ltd.

